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MEGA machines

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It's time for...

MEGA machines ONE

Issue Number 4

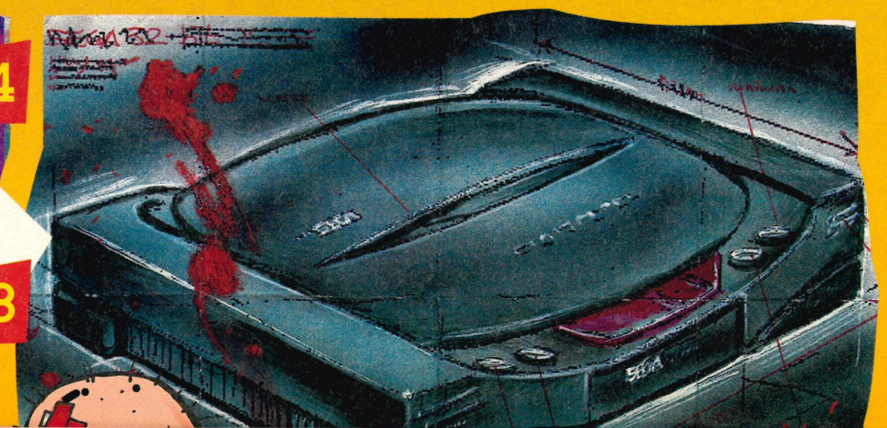
December 1993

COMPLETELY STUFFED!



Completely Stuffed! 004
Er... this is it! Yes, the first-ever MEGA MACHINES contents page is here. Good, innit?

Vibes & Hot Shots 008
Be among the first people in the UK to see what Sega's new 32-bit console will look like (just smuggled out of Japan, so don't tell on us!), plus all the news that's new and previews that's poo (are you sure that's right? —Ed).



Work Yourself Into A Leather! 077
You could win a very limited edition *Robocop Vs. The Terminator* leather jacket worth three hundred sobs, plus loads of T-Shirts, carts and other stuff

020 The Write Brothers
We thieved a stack of letters from our sister magazine Sega Force Mega (they're big girl's blouses) for resident rascals Nick 'n' Nige to answer. Who are they? What are they like? Who gives a donkey's dong!?

020 The Leader Speaks!
We were going to do a massive feature detailing how much of a rip-off cart games are but, when we came to research it, we found that they're actually quite reasonable! Bah. Sega's Big Boss Bloke puts the record straight, as do a whole host of others...

026 Caught In The Act
Yo! Hey! Check it out! (Get on with it! —Ed). We hit the mean streets of London's West End to find out what our potential readers are up to — and do a bit of shopping while we're down there.

028 The Review Board!
When we were deciding what to put into MEGA MACHINES we thought it would be a neat idea to get hold of all the latest Mega Drive and M-CD games, then write detailed reviews on them! We've even put special ratings in, too, so you can see what we thought of the game. A good idea, we reckon, and one that's bound to catch on...

078 The Ultimate Challenge
Every issue, we challenge the top Sega gamers from a different school to beat us at a new release. This month Ludlow Secondary School have a crack at *Sensible Soccer* and, if you fill out the coupon in the news pages, next month it could be YAW SKOOL!

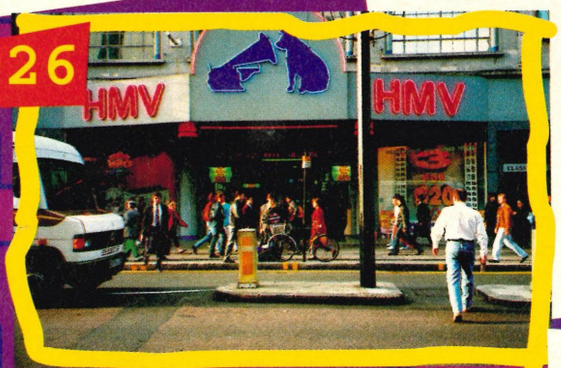
082 Mega Hits*
Our regular anagrammatical column investigates the games you *could* have been playing if you weren't wise enough to buy a Mega Drive. SNES, Amiga and PC releases all get the slagging they deserve — cruel? Certainly. But fun? You bet!

084 Ram Raid!
Our qualified team of ram raiders have had years of in-depth training, and are fully tooled-up with all the correct safety equipment — so don't try this yourselves! (End public service announcement here —Ed). This month, Virgin Games get a surprise visit...

090 The Charts
Yeah, we know it's a crap name for the charts page... that's why we're asking you to come up with a better one! Discover the highest climbers of the month (Chris Bonnington's still hanging in there), and even win the number one-selling Mega Drive game. By the way, **OUR** charts go all the way to eleven...

from Virgin Games. On the other hand, you *could* lose...







And there's more? There certainly is!

More...

MEGA machines COMPLETELY STUFFED!

The Big Games List Thing 121

You want an eight-page pocket-sized guide to *every* Mega Drive game available, complete with accurate ratings and other useful info? Then you'd better have some scissors and a couple of staples handy, hadn't you?

Gameful Employment 104

So... you wanna work in the games industry, do you? Well before you go sending off your digitised CVs and scouring the 'Help Wanted' section in *Computer Trade Weekly*, check out our indispensable guide. This month, Birmingham-based biggies **US Gold** reveal their trade secrets.

Jesus Saves! 126

...But MEGA MACHINES get it on the rebound! You give us some of your money and, in return, we'll post a year's worth of MEGA MACHINES through your letter box. Er, well, actually the *Post Office* will do that bit, but we'll take care of everything else (when we get back from the Bahamas).

Dr. Ruthless 108

He's wild, he's crazy, he's a terrific tipster and... he works for a different Mega Drive magazine! Sadly, we're stuck with the completely useless Dr. Ruthless to provide our tips and playing guides. Oh well, at least he's got the sense to offer decent reader bribes...





Next please!

Classified Information 128

Our very own page-bound car boot sale offers many items for sale or swap — you may even find the pen-pal of your dreams! (Or nightmares —Ed). Well actually, if the truth be told, you won't: Not until you start sending some in, anyway...

Stray Bullets 130

Various odds 'n' sods to round off with, including illuminating quotes from the past four weeks, and a big box showing who's done what this issue (although nobody owned up to the one last Wednesday that just *would not* sink until we swamped it with half a roll and flushed like crazy).

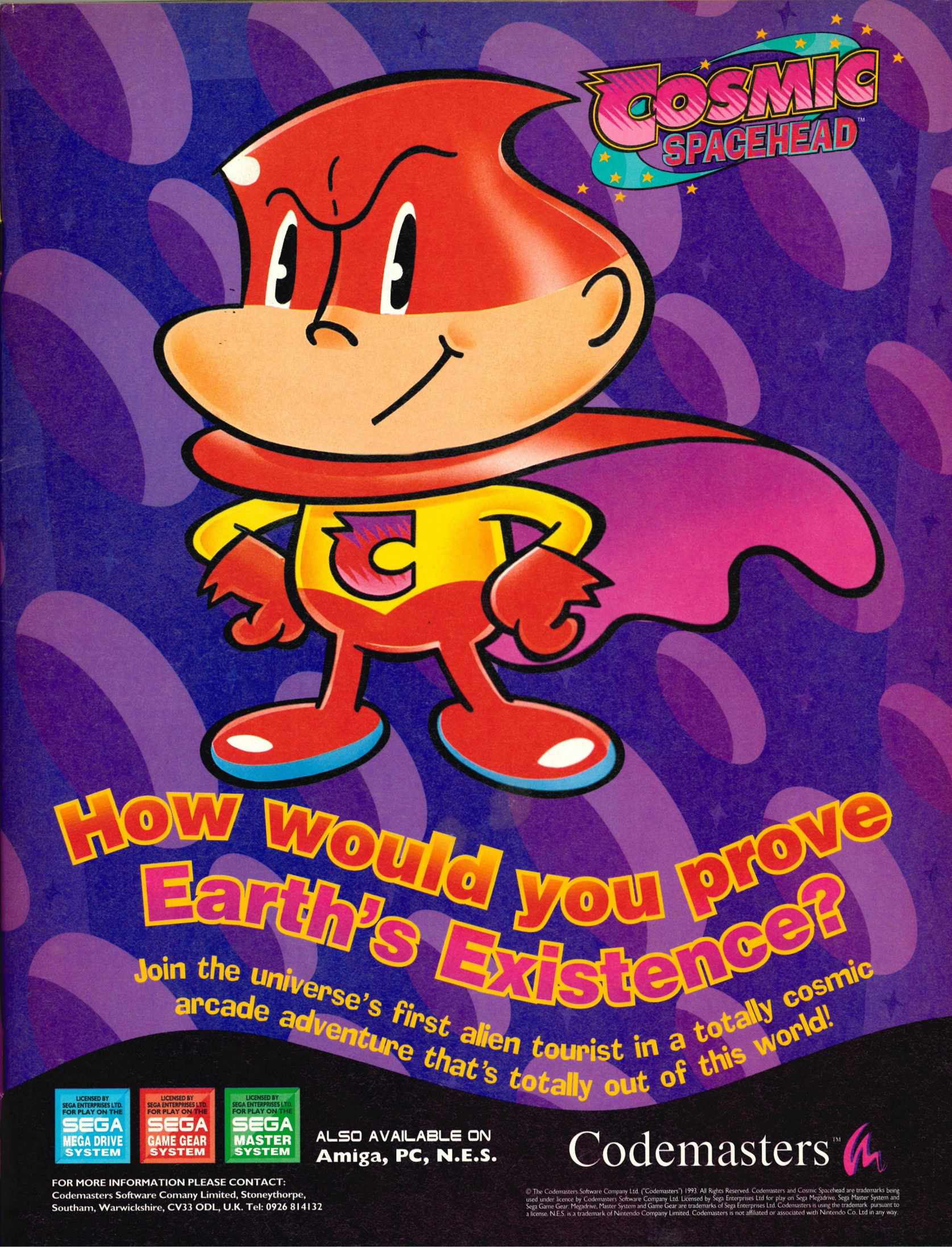
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VIBES

Steve Shields
Managing Editor

Later,

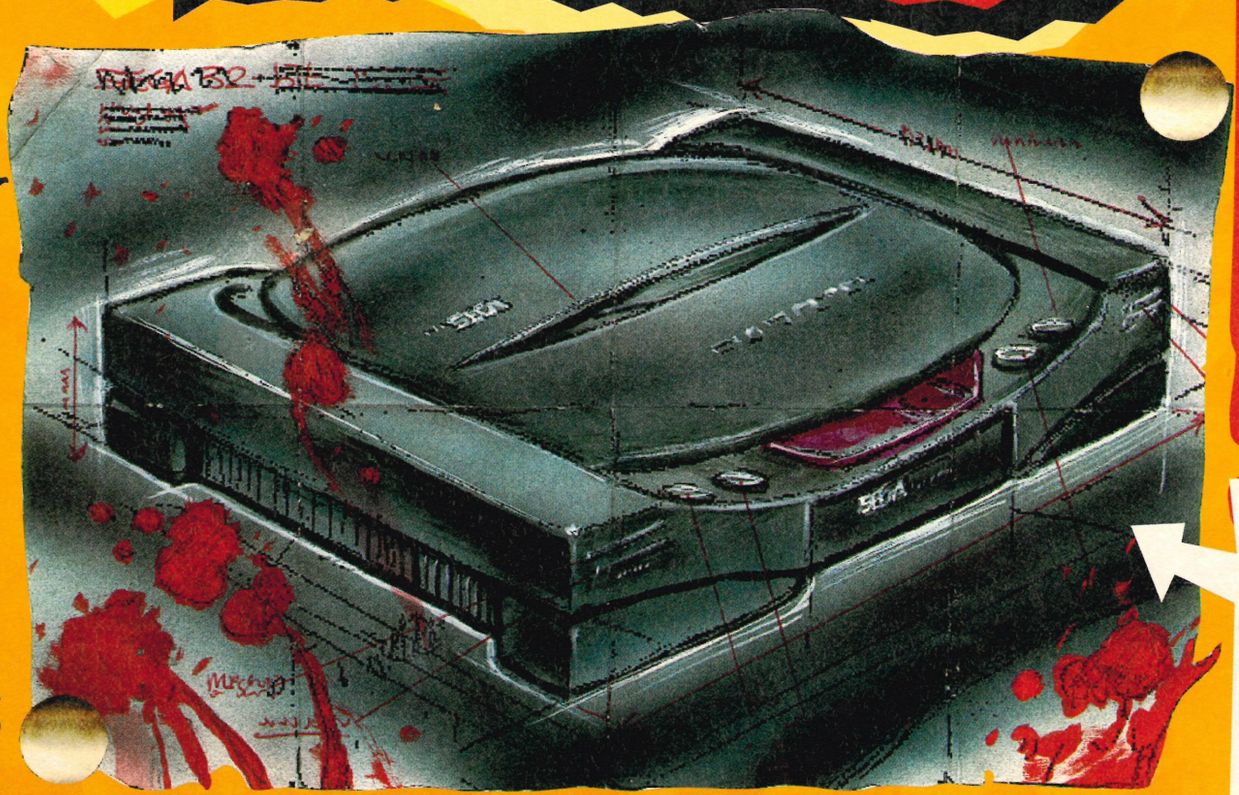
said he'd leave it I didn't mention him. Anyhow, as you just saw, I have inserted a mention — but just can't seem to find him to tell him...

In the end, the inspiration for this opening editorial came from the most unlikely source of all — our 'teenage gangsta' team of mag assistants (Gav, Milo — yes that *is* his real name — and Andy). They reckoned the best thing to do was just say something along the lines of 'You ain't seen anything like this before.'

Well, it might be corny... but they're not wrong. You *ain't* seen anything like this in the Sega mag world before!

Let us know what you think of MEGA MACHINES by giving us a call on 0584 875851 any weekday between 4.30pm-5.30pm. We'd really like to know what you reckon (even if you think it sucks big sweaty ones).

Anyway, we're about to be chucked out of the big smelly room that MEGA MACHINES comes from by da management (apparently we're making too much noise *again*) so I'd better wrap up.



Here's an accurate 'artist's impression' of what the new 32-bit Sega console will look like. We know it's an accurate representation of the machine but, unfortunately, we can't tell you how we know! A lot of cloak-and-dagger-type activity surrounded our, erm, procurement of the image – but if you really want to discover how we came by it, write to us at Wormwood Scrubs and we'll tell you (we expect to be residing there at Her Majesty's leisure soon).

RUNNING RINGS

Sega have joined forces with **Hitachi** to work on a new generation of video games machine, code-named 'Saturn', to kick the butt of two similar ventures: **Nintendo**'s Project Reality and **3DO**'s Real. All three are in a race to get their 'next level of interactive entertainment' into as many homes as possible, and success depends on price, software availability and how soon they arrive in the high street.

As yet there's no word on the latter, but the **Sega**/Hitachi partnership looks poised to put up a good battle on the other two fronts, with a $500 machine coming out next autumn. Real's on sale in the States for $700 and Project Reality is due towards the end of 1995; Sega are hoping the hefty price tag and late release will give Saturn the edge.

Their strategy seems carefully planned. Sega's US president, Tom Kalinke, stated: 'If we wanted to we could bring out a machine more or less tomorrow. But it's a question of being able to launch at the right price. I'm not interested in marketing any machine over $500.'

DRAGON IT ON A BIT

One of the biggest complaints we've had about the Mega-CD is the lack of decent software. Games such as *Night Trap* and *Sewer Shark* look good but they're not very interactive. Well step back, folks, 'cos the first interactive cartoon, ***Dragon's Lair***, is set to appear soon, thanks to the talented bods at **ReadySoft**.

Fans of the original **Don Bluth** coin-op will remember how incredible it was. Compared to other machines of the time, it stood out as the cutting edge of technolo-





gy. The Mega-CD version's looking hot, too, every element of the arcade classic included as you take on the role of heroic knight Dirk.

Beautiful Princess Daphne has been captured by Singe the Dragon (NB: this is not an instruction) and is being held in a deep, dark cavern. Battle through danger-packed levels, tackling all manner of nasty beasts and traps before facing off against the massive fire-breathing dragon himself.

The cartoon animation is looking incredible and CD-quality music and speech add to what should be a top Mega-CD game. Keep your eyes peeled for a full preview of *Dragon's Lair* in the near future.

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Prince of Persia — a stunning game. End of story.

Except… not quite. You see, even with the Mega-CD version, and despite the fact that **Sega** and other games publishers are trying to get a CD machine into every home, **Domark**, in their infinite wisdom, have finally decided to release a Mega Drive cart version of this classic game.

That's all you need to know for now, so we'll just chuck you a few screenshots and pack you on your way…



PADDING IT OUT (A BIT - Ed)

Good Lord! Can it be? A joypad for less than a tenner?! With turbo buttons and a slow-motion switch?

It's true, folks. The ***Dragon Speed Pad*** is on the shelves this very minute, waiting for you to take it home and give it a bowl of warm milk.

The turbo mode runs at 28 MHz (a lot faster than the Mega Drive so it's wasted, really) and the relevant buttons are conveniently placed above their normal counterparts, to avoid confusion.

According to manufacturers **Dragon International**, 'Dragon Speed Pads are the best on the market but we're pitching them at the lowest price. We must be mad. People will be mad not to buy them'!

It held up well in testing (and gave us *another* excuse to play *Mortal Kombat*) while the £9.99 price tag is a tempting proposition for anyone in need of a replacement.

And while we're on the subject of gaming accessories, here are a few more bits 'n' bobs:

Slick Sticks have released the ***Raptor*** (hmm, wonder which film they're cashing in on here?) for those with both a Mega Drive and SNES (yeah, all three of you). Apart from looking ridiculous, the pad costs 20 nicker (all right then, £19.99 to you, Guv) and they didn't even send us a sample to pit against the *Speed Pad*.

Next on the slagging-off platform is **ASCII Entertainment Software**, who sent us some fascinating slides of their logo and one of their products, the ***AsciiPad MD***. We've had one in the office for some time now and it's impressed everyone — it's light, responsive and comfortable.

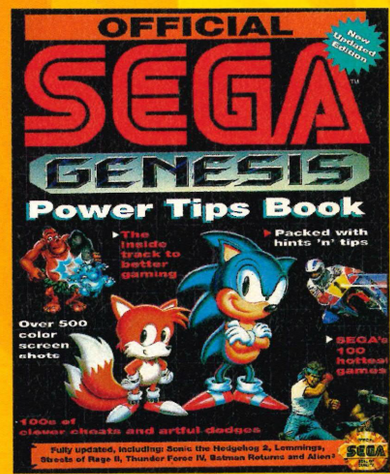
The only problem is the Start button. *Mortal Kombateers* will have incredible problems blocking moves, as it's just far enough between your thumbs to be frustrating. Still, if you never block or don't have the game, it's well worth checking out.



IT'S OFFICIAL!

The ***Official Sega Mega Drive Power Tips Book 2*** is now available. Covering loads 'n' loads of top games, including *Mortal Kombat, Cool Spot, X-Men* and *Jungle Strike*, it explores all the newest and best games in incredible detail — *Ecco: The Dolphin* alone takes up eight pages!

For our money, it completely outclasses **Virgin**'s *GamesMaster — The Official Book*, which is a little cheaper but interspersses 'humorous' features with hardly any tips at all. Best of all, of course, you could just read Dr Ruthless in MEGA MACHINES every month…



VAMPIRE KILLER

Hot Shot!

In 1914, the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand triggered the first World War. That much we all know. However, **Konami** can now reveal that a vampiress, Elizabeth Bartley, was behind Ferdinand's death.

By gathering the lost souls of people killed in war, she hopes to summon her uncle — none other than Count Dracula — from the netherworld he was banished to by the Belmont family.

Two men are aware of these evil machinations, Johnny Morris, an aged children's entertainer (or direct descendant of the Belmont family — your choice), and Eric Ricard, who's seeking revenge for the loss of his lover's soul. Morris is a master of whips, while Ricard is deadly with a spear; both vampire killer's weapons power-up eight times, developing supernatural qualities on the way.

On their separate quests — one player only, folks — they face hordes of demented monstrosities, including animated corpses (complete with flies), haunted suits of armour, bone-throwing skeletons and bats.

In true Konami style, there are nasty mid-bosses and stage bosses fit to curl your toes, like an enormous moth, gargoyle and a huge golem. If you make it past these loathsome creatures, you've the pleasure of facing Bartley and then… who knows?

If you're familiar with the excellent *Castlevania* series on SNES and NES, *Vampire Killers* shouldn't be a surprise. Check out what Nintendo owners have been gloating about when it arrives in early '94; you won't be disappointed and you're certain to be horrified.

SMELLS LIKE TEAM SPIRIT

Decisions, decisions… We've all been working on putting this first issue of Mega Machines together for a month now and we still can't agree the best way to welcome you to the magazine.

James Beaven (the reviews editor) wanted me to talk a load of old tosh about how different our reviews are. You know the sorta thing 'biggest, boldest, best' etc — quite frankly the rest of us thought that was a load of cobblers. After all, what can we tell you about a review that you can't work out by just looking at one?

Adrian from features wanted to gas about all the 'really ace bits I've done' in this first issue. Ram Raid, Caught in the Act and all that sorta stuff. Again, it sounded to the rest of us like a pretty stoopid idea. So, if you're interested in finding out about the features — you'd better start reading them…

Mark, the designer with the biggest chair, wanted to tell you — wait for this — MEGA MACHINES is 'on its side'. Well bloody never! Mind you, at least that would've enabled me to slide in a few fnarr fnarr gags about working on an upright organ…

Turning to Mat, the News Editor, wasn't any use either. All he was interested in filling this space with was some sorta 'New 32-Bit Sega console from Hell' rant. We almost went for that one, but then Al (one of our trusty writing squad) pointed out that it was, spookily, the lead news story — not more than 5 inches from where you're reading now. Ho hum. One of our other writers, Nick Lawrence, was just as bad — he got so

VIBES

STREET FIGHTIN' SEQUEL

If you're one of those people who's had it up to here with *Street Fighter II*, read no further! The latest instalment in (nearly) everyone's favourite World Warriors series has just hit the arcades in Japan. **Capcom**'s ***Super Street Fighter II*** is already wowing game fans in Tokyo; massive queues formed for what some are calling 'the video game event of the decade'.

This time around, four new characters have entered the Street Fighting arena to take on the existing combatants, which means you can now take control of one of 14 cool characters ('course, *World Heroes 2* on the Neo Geo already has this feature, so ha!). It kicks off with an incredible intro sequence showing Ryu launching a devastating fireball straight out of the screen, followed by the all-new logo spinning into place.

Next up is an updated world map which shows the four new competitors' countries (Mexico, Jamaica, Hong Kong and England). Also revamped are the characters' profiles, which now look incredible.

Four on the floor

So what about the game itself? First of all, let's take a look at the four new fighters and their stunning abilities.

First up is Guile's daughter, Cammy. Decked out in combat fatigues, Cammy's one of the fastest fighters, even beating Chun Li in the speed stakes. Her nimble moves, such as the Cannon Spike (a vertical rising attack) and the Spiral Arrow (drilling manoeuvre) are lethal at any range.

Dee-Jay is a Jamaican rapper and lethal fighter with a permanent grin plastered across his face. He's able to launch a variety of attacks including the Air Slasher (an energy wave) and Machine Gun Upper (lightning-fast chest kick).

Fei Long's a hot-blooded young fighter from Hong Kong who looks uncannily like martial arts master Bruce Lee. Choose him and you're able to use his Shien-Kyaku (Fire Kick) and Rekka Ken (a deadly punch).

Last, but by no means least, put your hands together and welcome Thunder Hawk. T Hawk's a massive Red Indian who you don't want to mess with! Get on the wrong side of him and you'll suffer his Mexican Typhoon, Tomahawk Buster and Condor Dive.

That outfit's really 'you'

But these new characters aren't the only cause for celebration. The original Street Fighters have been upgraded and, in some cases, given spectacular new moves.

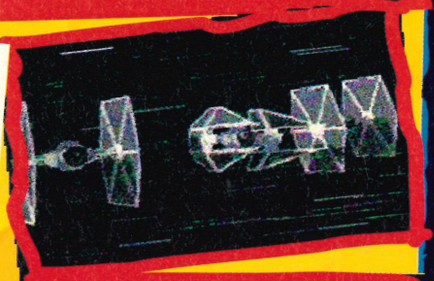
Ryu and Ken's fireballs have been improved with different-coloured energy attacks, depending on the strength of the punch. They can perform a Flaming Dragon Punch to set fire to both their fists and their opponent's body (similar to a Yoga Flame).

Balrog is able to leap off the side of the screen and fly, Honda-style, into unsuspecting opponents, Vega lashes out a nasty energy fist while dropping from above and Zangief has even more powerful throws.

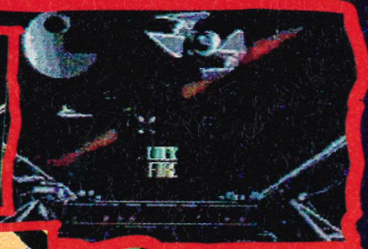
To show off these moves, Capcom have created new frames of animation and the resulting fighters move smoothly and fluidly. For instance, when Chun Li launches her fireball attack, she sticks her arms out straight, sticks her bum in the air and with a flick of her skirt unleashes a fast energy attack (Er, from which end, exactly? —Ed). Another interesting feature in the game will be the ability to change the colour of each character's clothing!



Like you, we've only seen static shots of the game. Bah, not fair!













Hot shot!

VIRTUA RACING

REBEL YELL

Even though the ***Star Wars*** trilogy ended with *Return of the Jedi* in 1983, there's more interest in **George Lucas**'s space saga than ever before. The SNES has been blessed with *Super Star Wars* and *Empire Strikes Back* and the Master System and Game Gear have had *Star Wars*. So when does the Mega Drive get a look-in?

December, when ***Rebel Assault*** will drop out of lightspeed and wing its way to the Mega-CD. Produced by **JVC/LucasArts**, it features 15 levels of jaw-dropping action as you become a Rebel pilot.

Although *Rebel Assault*'s basically a glorified flight simulator, it features some of the most stunning graphics ever seen on the Mega-CD. As well as amazing in-game graphics, Full Motion Video clips from the *Star Wars Trilogy* are included to add extra realism. Forget *Silpheed*, *Rebel Assault* sets higher standards.

The storyline's based on the classic movie theme of good vs evil. The Imperial Empire is the most powerful force in the galaxy and only the Rebellion, armed with a few ships and a handful of hot-shot pilots, stands against them. As one of these ace fliers, you find yourself behind the controls of an A-wing then X-wing fighter as you battle through level after tricky level.

The A-wing section's seen from behind the arrow-shaped craft and is a kind of training mode. Other levels include negotiating an asteroid field and even the legendary attack on the Death Star.

As you'd expect with LucasArts behind this project, *Rebel Assault* looks like being a hot game, combining the speed of a classic shoot-'em-up with the depth of a PC flight sim. Expe[illegible] a full preview real soon.

WHO HE?

The **European Computer Trade Show** (ECTS, Autumn '93) was a corking success, according to its organisers (but then they wouldn't say if it was a big pile of steamies, would they?). Over 5,750 people visited the show over the three-day event, seeing

its predecessors, but what about the soundtrack? The good news is that Capcom have followed Sega's example and installed the video game cabinet with the Q-Sound system. This gives crystal-clear 3D sound and basically, er… sounds great!

Eight fighters at once?!

The latest news from Japan is there's even a special 'Tournament Battle' version, which features four monitors linked together so eight players can fight at the same time! That's right, you'll have your hands full taking on *seven* opponents at once. Capcom have released few details about 'Tournament Battle' but our contacts tell us that fighters slug it out until one competitor remains.

The only gripe we've heard about this incredible game is that it's rumoured to be slower than *Turbo Edition*.

So why are Capcom bothering with a *Super Street Fighter II* game instead of releasing *Street Fighter 3*? It seems they've recently lost some of their top programmers to **SNK** (makers of the Neo Geo) and instead of an all-new game, chose to release this stop-gap machine.

We should see *Street Fighter 3* later next year so until then, make do with *Super Street Fighter II*, which should've reached these shores by the time you read this.

Any bets on **Sega** releasing a 32-Meg MD game in the not too distant future?



Cammy



Fei Long



Dee Jay



T. Hawk







Just look at that group of stoopid tourists, sitting about like fat prats while the action rages on around 'em. Bit like our bosses, really.



Beautifully for your Mega Drive. The first batch of screenshots Sega released were abysmal; plain colour backgrounds and hexagonal tyres. We're happy to report that although only 50% finished, *Virtua Racing*'s now coming along great. It moves extremely fast and plays realistically.

As you can see, backgrounds are detailed and the car's fairly authentic. Wiping out your machine's a lot of fun — it cartwheels while shedding pieces. Although it only has three courses, there are several difficulty settings so it should be a hard nut to crack.

On the cart we checked out opponents weren't included, but Sega promise 15 other cars with different performance specs and four colours schemes.

The four viewpoints — from the cockpit, behind the machine, diagonally and high above — are quickly and smoothly changed with a single button. More excitingly, a two-player simultaneous option's being implemented, presumably by dividing the screen horizontally.

As the first cart featuring Sega's Super Processing chip, *Virtua Racing*'s a major showcase for their vast programming potential. It's also taking considerable time to code so watch for news of its release.

all the latest in video game technology and getting a glimpse into the future of interactive entertainment with some of the world's leading games developers.

It's not very exciting being told about an exhibition that's been and gone, is it? If you've been there, you know all about it, and if you haven't, you missed all the fun. So we reckon you should try to get down to **ECTS Spring '94**, which will take place in April at the **Business Design Centre, Upper Street, Islington, London N1**.

In the meantime, if YOU are the individual who's got a massive arrow pointing to his head in the photo, write to us NOW to claim a special prize! Well, we had to make it interesting somehow, didn't we?



PC THE ACTION?

Arguments, arguments. You're after a Mega Drive but your parents want you to get something that'll 'help with school'? We can see it now (cue wavy lines and daydream sequence)…

'But I have to relax sometimes, Mum, and anyway, it will improve my hand-to-eye co-ordination.'

'But Johnny, it's not that we don't want you to have fun, it's just that you could write essays on a proper computer. And wouldn't that be nice for homework? Your teacher would be ever so pleased — you know how bad your handwriting is.'

You just can't win, can you?

But now you can! **Amstrad** have reduced the price of its PC/Mega Drive hybrid, the ***Mega PC***, by half. Now you can play *Sensible Soccer* while your parents think you're writing about aspects of Aristotelian tragedy in *Death of a Salesman*. And the best bit is it's only £500, which isn't bad for a PC with these specs, never mind the fact it's got an MD thrown in.

Oh, and if you want to show this article to your parents in the hope they'll get you one of these tasty and argument-saving pieces of kit, the PC's specs are: £499 (*including* VAT) for a 386SX running at 25MHz, with 2Mb of RAM, 40Mb hard drive and colour monitor. The MD's specs are… the same as normal, except in a bigger box.

VIBES

INSIDE OUT

Marauding organisms, pulsating orifices and diabolical machines! All this and more in our preview/compo of Psygnosis' *Microcosm*! And you thought we were talking about our advertising department...

Hot Shot!



Hands up those of you who remember a dire sci-fi film called *Fantastic Voyage*? How about *Inner Space*, starring Dennis Quaid? 'Course you do, and the thing these movies have in common are human bodies — their insides, to be precise. They feature a miniaturised ship, injected into a living person and catapulting the audience into an incredible, internal adventure.

This brings us very conveniently (don't you just love links?) to ***Microcosm*** from **Psygnosis**, creators of such fine Sega games as *Shadow of the Beast II* and the forthcoming *Dracula*. Mega-CD owners are in for a real treat with this new game featuring some of the most stunning visuals you'll ever see.

The story (yes, there is one) is set in the year 2051 on the far-off planet of Bodor. Two of its largest corporations, Cybertech and Axiom, are locked in a bitter power struggle and innocent civilians are caught in the crossfire.

The head of Cybertech, Korsby, has been injected with mind-controlling devices by Axiom and you've been recruited to pilot an experimental craft into Korsby's body, to destroy the devices. Your craft flies down veins and internal organs, blasting enemy vessels to save the boss's life.

There'll be a full review in the very next issue of MEGA MACHINES but until then, why not try your hand at our excellent *Microcosm* competition and win cool Psygnosis prizes!

Little ship, BIG prize!

To coincide with the release of *Microcosm* on Mega-CD, we've teamed up with **Psygnosis** to offer you lot some cracking prizes.

The folks at Psygnosis have dug deep into their plush, velvet-lined pockets (they're rolling in it!) and pulled out prizes most people would kiss their grandma for.

Let's take a look at what's on tonight's star studded conveyor belt... A MEGA-CD 2 PLUS *MICROCOSM* GOLD CD!

Cor blimey, missus! A brand-spanking new Mega-CD 2, which plays Sega CD games, CD+Gs and your own music discs! Fed up with playing *Night Trap*? No problem! Whip the disc out and slap in your favourite Dire Straits or Meatloaf album (what?!).

On top of that you'll receive an ultra-rare *Microcosm* gold CD. These are incredibly rare and normally used to produce (or master, as we say in the biz) copies of a CD game. Psygnosis themselves only have a few so if you win it, make sure you look after it.

Not only does the disc contain *Microcosm*, it's also gold-plated! Let's face it folks, this is one prize not to be sneezed at (or on).

If you're not the big winner, never fear, there are also ten runners-up prizes to be nabbed: a copy of the hit game ***Puggsy*** on CD *or* speedy platform romp ***Wiz 'n' Liz*** on cart.





///MICROCOSM COMPETITION///

Listen guys, you folks at MEGA MACHINES might think you're hot stuff but this compo is a doddle. Take a look at my answer below... impressive or what?! I really know my stuff and seeing as I'm such a clever sod, I deserve to win that top prize of a Mega-CD 2 and a *Microcosm* gold CD. If I don't, I'll lock myself away in my bedroom and probably throw a girly tantrum.

My answer is: .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

If I only get a runner-up prize, please make it:

☐ *Puggsy*

☐ *Wiz 'n' Liz*

I've sent my answer to **TRY SAYING 'MMMM' COMPO, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**, and I'm going to wait by the letterbox all month just to see if I've won.

Don't disappoint me.

Cheers, lads!

Hot Shot!



PUGGSY

Even more strangeness awaits in *Puggsy*. It's another platform game but this time the main character's an orange space-hopper! Puggsy's spacecraft has crash-landed on a nameless planet so the rotund chap has to battle through level after tricky level to find his way home.

From the stunning opening sequence to the loopy characters you encounter on your way, *Puggsy*'s great fun. A healthy 17 levels are included in the cart version and more are planned for the CD game, which features stunning music, animated intro sequences and a variety of improved bosses.

Platform fans will fall over themselves for a play of this cracking arcade adventure!

Hot Shot!



WIZ 'N' LIZ

This cute one or two-player platform game is packed with wacky humour and more levels than you can shake a big stick at! Wiz and Liz are a magician and witch who race around their strange enchanted world at high speed, whacking wabbits and generally causing a nuisance wherever they go.

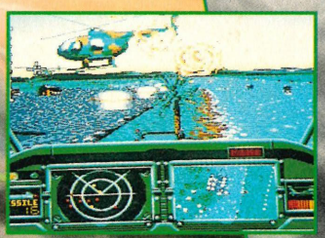
Massive guardians and crazy spells add to the weirdness as the two medieval marvels make their way across the Homeworld, from snow-covered plains to forest-infested plateaus. If you're uses to games moving at *Sonic*-style speeds, check this game out — it's a blast!

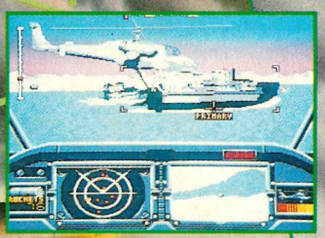
THUNDERHAWK

THE ULTIMATE COMBAT SIMULATOR

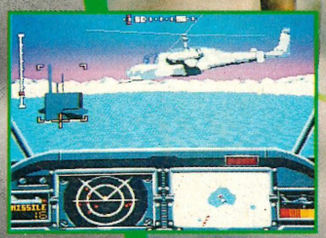
FLY YOUR THUNDERHAWK THROUGH A TOTAL OF 48 MISSIONS SET IN 10 DIFFERENT LOCATIONS. USE STRATEGY AND TACTICS DISCUSSED IN THE BRIEFING ROOM TO LOCATE, INTERCEPT AND DESTROY THE ENEMY IN THIS DEFINITIVE 3D HELICOPTER COMBAT SIMULATION.

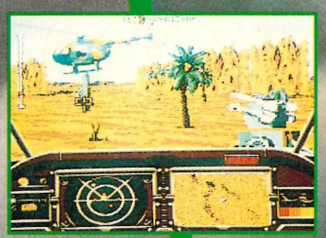












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VIBES

QUICKIES...

With all the fuss over *Street Fighter II*, *Sonic CD* and *Sonic Spinball*, you'd think Sega were the only company bringing out games for the Mega Drive. However, it's often third party licensees who produce the best software and next year sees a whole slew of games arriving for the world's best-selling console. Here's a look at a few of the companies in the running and what they're up to.

EXTREME

Formerly known as **Bignet**, the company responsible for *Black Hole Assault CD*, **Extreme** have a couple of interesting products in the pipeline. The classic (ie, old) ***Choplifter*** gets a facelift and is set to appear on the MD in the first half of next year.

They're also planning to release what's already been described as 'the best boxing title so far on a home system'. ***Riddick Bowe*** may just topple *Muhammad Ali* as the best MD boxing game.

Due for a release later in the year will be a strategy game, ***Battletech***, on both CD and cart. It's based on the popular RPG boardgame and features massive robots kicking the carp out of each other (sort of *Street Fighter II* for intellectuals).

TRADEWEST



This American company, responsible for *Super Baseball 2020* and other reasonable titles, are releasing the Mega Drive version of ***Battletoads/Double Dragon***.



WANNA BE THE CHAMP?

So you've beaten all your friends at *Mortal Kombat*, ground Goro to a pulp, and now you're looking for more? Before you start calling yourself **European Sega Champion**, you'll have to beat the likes of **Karl Roberts**, *Sega*'s '92 and '93 senior UK champion — and that's before you even get to the European final!

But putting in all the practice is well worth it if '94's venue is anywhere near as flashy as this year's: the Technical Museum in Vienna, one of that pretty city's nicest nightspots.

The event attracted 11 Sega territories and was hosted by a mad mysterious reporter from the 'Potsdam Pirate Satellite' and Austria's most famous TV presenter, **Arabella Kiesbauer**. Together the two re-created Sega's slick Mega-CD ad to launch the Mega-CD 2.

Mikael Roth of Sweden and **Markku Rankala** of Finland are the new junior and senior European champions respectively, fending off all-comers in *Cool Spot*, *Final Fight*, *Jungle Strike* and Mega-CD *Jaguar XJ220*. Karl Roberts was beaten at his favourite game, *Jungle Strike*, by Markku's cool score of 114,000.

Damon Hill, Britain's great new hope for motor racing, made a surprise appearance and, fresh from his recent victories at Monza and Hungary, brought down the chequered flag on the event. After announcing the winners, he awarded Belgium's **Nathalie Coulller** his racing gloves in recognition of being the first girl ever to progress to the European final.

So if you want to take on the world, you'd better start practising, 'cos by the time you're good enough to take on Europe the competition will be a worldwide event!

LEGENDS OF THE RING

Hot Shot! 14

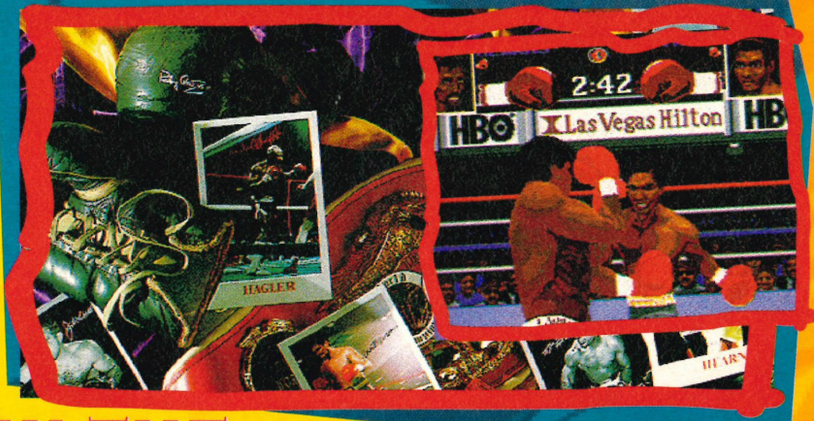
Were you one of the thousands of people who tuned in to see the **Lennox Lewis/Frank Bruno** fight on Sky TV? If you were, boxing must be your thang. Unfortunately, the Mega Drive hasn't got a lot in the way of good boxing games, with the possible exception of *Muhammad Ali*.

Legends of the Ring, from **Electro Brain**, looks set to change that. This 8 Meg game becomes available on import any day now and features fighting action the likes of which you've never seen.

For a start, each fighter is massive, standing at three-quarters of the screen height. With smooth animation and lightning-fast moves, these visuals will leave you breathless.

Your boxer's viewed from behind as he goes head-to-head with some of the world's greats, such names as Marciano, Leonard, Duran, Hagler, Hearns and Shields (Eh? —Sub Ed). You can use one of these fighters or create your own character and battle through the ten top pros on your way to the World Heavyweight Championship belt.

We should have a full review of *Legends of the Ring* soon but until then practice that fancy footwork — you're gonna need it!



FAST FOOD

Hedgehog crisps haven't had the best of track records. They were banned for possibly inciting people to go out and eat hedgehogs (?!), no doubt leaving manufacturers **Bensons' Crisps** with a warehouse full of the stuff. And then, we can only assume, someone had a brainwave.

'Eureka!' he probably cried, 'I've got it. I know how we can market the stuff! We'll sell **Sonic the Hedgehog** snacks, made into the shape of the best known character in America, and soon every child in the land will be shovelling forkloads of the stuff into their obnoxious gaping mouths! We'll be rich beyond our wildest dreams!'

And so Valerie Gilbert Public Relations was put on to the case and came up with a super-dooper idea. The packs cost a mere 15 of your finest pennies and there's be a compo to win 2000 Sonic baseball caps, 200 Sonic watches (just like the ones we're giving away this ish) and 20 Mega Drives. Oooh! Aaah!

PLAY THE RATINGS GAME!

Mary Whitehouse 1, Normal People 0. All computer and console games containing 'cinematic scenes of a sexual or violent nature' must be submitted for *Night Trap*-style classification, according to the **European Leisure Software Publishers Association** (ELSPA).

They recently signed a preliminary agreement with the **Video Standards Council** (VSC), the body responsible for awarding certificates to films. This agreement covers six months in which the VSC will prepare a series of detailed guidelines explaining how the rules should be interpreted and the business practices to follow.

Roger Bennet at ELSPA denied the cynical view (who, us?) that the agreement was rushed into place as a result of the controversy surrounding *Night Trap*, claiming ELSPA and the VSC had been discussing such an arrangement for a year before the game was released, prompted by the vision that the future for computers and consoles lies in video-quality graphics.

Violent cases

Bennet says games publishers won't be *forced* to submit games, as both ELSPA and the VSC are advisory bodies and have no legal powers, but those who release unsubmitted

On the Level

There we were, all in the office and ready for a full eight hours of *Mortal Kombat*ing, and the next thing we knew we were on a coach to London to see the new **HMV *Level One***. Oh, it's a hard life at MEGA MACHINES.

Level One is HMV Oxford Street's new first floor gamesplaying section (hence the name), where there's all kinds of hunky-dory technology you've never seen before (like flashing lights and big screens) and (the real reason for going) *bucketloads* of games and consoles.

You can test different games for all kinds of formats, not just Mega Drive and SNES, and huddle around four Amigas with chums for an eight-player game of the specially-designed *Super Nipper* (named after the HMV dog from the logo).

So if you're in London, take an express lift to Level One and ogle all the goodies they've

The SNES game's already out in the States and we've had a sneak peak at the MD conversion.

It features the tough Lee brothers from *Double Dragon* as they team up with those wacky 'Toads for plenty of platform action and frantic fighting.

Why anyone would wish to throw two of the naffest computer games together is beyond us; let's hope it's better than it sounds.

DATA EAST

Look for two crazy **Data East** platform games early next year. First up is their answer to *Sonic*, in the shape of a game called ***High Seas Havoc***.



The title character's a cute parrot pirate by the name of Captain Lang. He and his animal friends inhabit an action-packed, swashbuckling world of seven tricky levels and loads of bad guys. *High Seas Havoc* should be out on import as you read this.

Their other offering is a wacky split-screen platform romp called ***Dashin' Desperadoes***. You and a pardner take control of Will and Rick, two rootin', tootin' cowboys, as they race against each other in an effort to win the hand of a hot chick named Jenny.

SUNSOFT

Currently developing hot **Warner Bros** games for the SNES (check out the forthcoming *Rabbit Rampage* and *Marvin Missions*), **Sunsoft** have a couple of games lined up for the Mega Drive.

Beauty and her Beast are set to appear in their own games, with Belle's adventures aimed at the younger games-player and the Beast's having more action, fighting and lads' stuff.

Also appearing soon is *Bubble & Skweek*. This lighthearted platform game combines the best elements from both *Sonic* and *Mario* in what could be one of the top carts of next year. It's been programmed by **FoxWilliams** (responsible for *Krusty's Fun House*) and it's gonna be big!



One for the girls, perhaps? Well, it's not exactly macho, now, is it?

So get yerself to your nearest chirpy cockney newsagent and force-feed yourself these 'extruded corn snacks' until your stomach ruptures. Go on. We dare you.



If these crisps don't taste great, I'll eat my hat! (…sorry).

COLUMNS 3

That old action puzzler ***Columns*** is back, this time with support for the **Sega** four-player 'Tap' and the emphasis on head-to-head matches for between one and five players.

The object is very simple: line up the blocks of three precious gems that fall out of the sky, à la *Tetris*, to remove identical gems in horizontal, diagonal or vertical lines of three or more. This can be engrossing in itself, but the fun factor's cranked up exponentially with the number of opponents.

Besides five colours of gem, magic crystals appear and can be used to erase your own lines of gems, add to opponents' lines or eliminate all gems of a certain colour. Two kinds of flashing stone flip your opponents' playing field and turn all stones black and white.

So many options

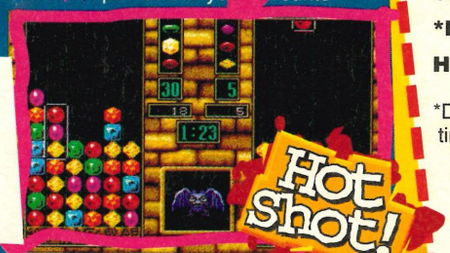
The two-player mode offers several backgrounds and different kinds of objects — for example, gems are replaced with fruits or factory parts.

There are two three-player modes. Free For All narrows the playing field from the standard six to just five columns, increasing difficulty and intensity. In One-on-Two mode, two players can gang up on a single player (heroes can really strut their stuff here).

The four and five-player modes return the playing field to six columns. However, the graphics have been simplified to fit on the screen — the gems are just coloured blocks. This a bit sad, but in the heat of competition you'd barely notice.

Rounding out the set is an odd four-player mode that pits two players head-to-head while the other two play Paper-Scissors-Stone to win items which help their *Columns*-playing partners.

The multi-player matches are so addictive, **Sega** should've slapped a warning sticker on the box. *Columns 3* is available on import from Japan so call your favourite retailer!



Topics under discussion at the moment include whether games such as *WWF* will have to be submitted, as they clearly fit the description of scenes depicting recognisable characters performing violent acts, but are clearly cartoon-like, and whether realistic but non-digitised games will fall under jurisdiction.

It seems that, far from curbing the number of controversial games, the new guidelines will increase their popularity. Games publishers may be tempted to release more '15' and '18' games in order to bring older players into the market.

There's also the possibility that players below the necessary ages will find ways of buying these games as a status symbol, in much the same way that many people below the ages of 15 and 18 see films with these ratings at the cinema or watch them on home video.

The controversy continues…

and canapés like we did!



The ULTIMATE Challenge

Next issue, the MEGA MACHINES Ultimate Challenge will be taking place in a different school, with a different Mega Drive game. Could it be yours? In order to enter *your* school into the challenge, simply fill out this coupon, get it signed by your head teacher, then have them get the school secretary to mail it to us at the address below. Fame, fortune, and even a free T-Shirt could all be yours!

Have you checked out our first Ultimate Challenge yet? If not, pop along to page 78 and do so, before returning here [if you *have* seen the feature, bear with us while the rest of 'em have a quick nose… talk amongst yourselves or something]. Ah, you're back. Good, isn't it? Now, down to business…

Dear MEGA MACHINES,

I've had a word with my headmaster/headmistress, and they said it'd be okay to miss a games lesson ('…just this once, mind you') in order to thrash you so-called journalists at your own game. So please descend upon our humble primary/secondary school bearing free T-Shirts a-plenty and a decent Mega Drive game. We'll show you who's *really* got the talent when it comes to wielding a joypad, ya pansies! Oh yeah, and if you *do* decide to hold your challenge at our school, contact the head teacher to sort out the details, will you? Ta!

MY NAME: .....

SCHOOL NAME: .....

SCHOOL ADDRESS: .....

.....

.....

.....**POST CODE:** .....

SCHOOL PHONE NUMBER: .....

***HEADPERSON'S NAME:** .....

HEADPERSON'S SIGNATURE:.....

*Dear Head. If you would like more information about our National Schools Sega challenge before committing yourself, please phone Managing Editor Steve Shields on 0584 875851 during normal working hours. He'll probably be by the coffee machine having a fag (well, it makes a change from the bike sheds), so please be patient.

Once completed, send this form to: **The Ultimate Challenge, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.**

VIBES

Hot Shot!



PHANTASY STAR 4

The latest instalment in *Sega*'s biggest RPG series is nearing completion as a monster 24-Meg cart. ***Phantasy Star 4*** makes no radical departure from the traditional Japanese text-based RPG: the player's team of characters use a map to go on an epic journey, frequently fighting monsters using text commands.

It isn't the sequel to *Phantasy Star 3* but rather a continuation of the second game, set a thousand years later when the planet's slowly being consumed by deserts. The story starts with Rudy (the hero) and Leila, his mentor and partner, being employed to exterminate monsters that have taken over a university in a small oasis town.

Of course, the two hunters unwittingly become embroiled in a grand adventure. They're joined by other characters who help weave a sweeping yet intricate story that should take the average player 40–50 hours to finish.

Enhancing the science fiction feel are the appearance of three vehicles that appeared back in the original *Phantasy Star* on the Master System. The Landmaster, Ice Digger and Flow Mover provide high-speed transport, making the journey easier. As they're also heavily-armoured and armed, they can be used to hunt monsters.

If you've never tried this style of game, *Phantasy Star 4* should be an excellent start for you to explore the interactive world of RPGs. If you're familiar with the genre, you've a month to wait before the Japanese release of literally the biggest RPG of all time.

binned!

We at MEGA MACHINES pride ourselves on being the best at what we do. Our job requires us to be top gamesplayers (cracking carts in a matter of hours is no problem), talented writers and all-round clever dicks — so when folk apply to us for jobs, we only consider the best of the best.

For instance, take our new recruits. **James Beaven** (formerly of naff Nintendo mag *Total*) is our dashing Reviews Editor, responsible for cracking the whip and making the rest of us work like billy-o. **Al Needham**, Staff Writer Supreme, came to us after turning down a part in *Eldorado*, and **Nick Lawrence** is, er… Mr and Mrs Lawrence's son (bless 'im).

Unfortunately, for every hot young writer in this business there are a few sad old scribblers. For instance, take a look at the application form of one of the many people we turned down, filled out in his bestest joined-up writing.

Now this sad individual may *look* like a promising bloke but take a closer look at those Outside Activities. What the hell's a 'Modern Concept Artist' — apart from a pretentious title?

Even with more 'O' levels than he has friends, this guy's application reveals him to be a sad old soul with a personality deficiency and a terminal case of halitosis. We wish him well in his chosen career and hope his handwriting improves.

Stop Press: This very applicant has just been given a position as Staff Writer on a 'top-selling' Nintendo mag. We always knew he was a Total wan(Snip! —Ed).

Outside Activities
(please give us a brief idea of your interests outside work)
Professional memberships, certificates, or licenses held
FULL, CLEAN DRIVING LICENSE
Past and present civic or cultural activities — include offices held
POLITICALLY ACTIVE, PARTICULARLY ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES.
Principal hobbies
VIDEOGAMES, PAINTBALL, LASERQUEST, SQUASH, TENNIS AND SKI-ING
I ALSO ENJOY DEBATING AND THEATRE, AND WORK AS A MODERN 'CONCEPT' ARTIST!
Special Skills
To be completed by applicant for editorial/advertising/production
Typing: ☑ Yes ☐ No — Words per minute 40
Dictation: ☐ Yes ☑ No — Words per minute
Computer skills: ☐ Hardware ☑ Software
To be completed by applicant for other types of work
Type of machines operated | Years experience



CASE FOR THE PROSECUTION

'Johnny, darling, what do you want for Christmas this year…?' those delicious words that make a million consumer items run through your mind, before you finally decide on the most overpriced, tacky, swiftly-binned and completely-unhelpful-in-any-way gift your seething brain can come up with.

But before you say, 'A subscription to *Edge*', why don't you have a look at the

WHERE TO, GUV'?

Christ, those Londoners have it all, don't they? To add to their collection of things to gloat about, they're going to get the **Christmas International Computer Show**.

Taking place in Hall 1 at the **Wembley Exhibition Centre** on the weekend of **19–21 November**, it should appeal to those who use 'serious' computers as well as the console crowd, so drag your dad along if he's into the exciting world of business applications. The 'Entertainment Feature' won't make up a huge part of the show so it's probably not worth making your way down from John O' Groats, but you can to try out the latest in computerised entertainment in the home'.

What looks to be one of the best parts of the show is the Virtual Reality stand, where you can try out the latest developments like **Zona**'s *Cyber Space System*, a 360-degree, 30-colour 'graphic extravaganza'. Then there's that 'ever-popular attraction' (read, 'old technology but quite fun'), the 3D Simulator — probably the one you'll end up playing if the queues for the Cyber Space System are as long as they look to be.

If the **Christmas International Computer Show** rings your bell, you'd better get your skates on because there's not much time left. Ring the ticket hotline on **0726 68020**, ASAP.

SEGA

The hot news for **Sega** owners is that **Sonic the Hedgehog** is set to appear in his first arcade machine. But this isn't just any Sonic game. This all-new adventure features so many hot elements that this coin-op will cause queues to put

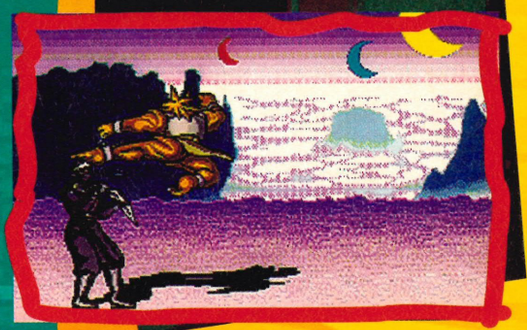
SPIDER-MANK

Hold on to your pants, friends. We were all whipped into a frenzy a while back by that crotch-tingling cart, *Spider-Man vs The Kingpin*, weren't we? Yes we were.

Well, try not to rub yourselves up against the nearest bus shelter in a frenzy, but **Sega** have announced that — yes! — they're bringing it out on CD! It's basically the same game but with more levels, more animation, more baddies, more, more, MOOOOOORRRRE! Sorry, getting carried away there.

We fired the CD up and man, were we entertained… for about five seconds. The most amusing sections are the cartoon interludes between the hot web-slinging action, where Spidey and his chums mouth badly-dubbed dialogue such as, 'Oh Spider-Man! Thank God you're on our side!'

Sega have even added a subgame. This consists of wetting some toilet paper and throwing it at the target-like disc access screen. Sega have thoughtfully included as much accessing as possible, so all the family can join in.



16 Hot Shot! 16

BATTLE FANTASY

Just can't get enough of the *Street Fighter II* brand of one-on-one brawling? This Mega-CD offering is set in a mystical land populated by elves, werewolves, dragons and other fantasy world fixtures.

Following the guidelines established by *SFII*, it offers a single-player story and two-player head-to-head mode. The motley cast of fighters include a female knight, rhinoceros, harpy and dwarf, each fighter with their own means of attack and power moves (usually triggered like a Sonic Boom or Hadoken).

In single-player mode, you collect experience points from beaten opponents to power-up your speed, power and defence parameters. It's also… Oh forget it, it's another hackneyed rip-off of *SFII* with a cheesy swords and sorcery facelift.

The graphics are abysmal. The characters are very basic — some even lack facial features. There's little or no movement in the bare backdrops and when it's included, scrolling's hilarious — in a scene set among pink clouds (!), castle battlements look like they're floating rather than poking through.

In spite of the otherwise crap graphics, fighters have realistic shadows instead of the usual grey blobs. But hey, what a great selling point!

Sorry to be so negative, but judging from what we've seen *Battle Fantasy* is a dire *SFII* clone which lacks charm and new features. Although the Mega-CD needs more games, **Micronet** won't be doing us any favours when this plops onto the shelves.

SONIC'S ARCADE ADVENTURE

cart but borrows elements from all of the blue spiky one's games. Unlike its predecessors, *Sonic Arcade Adventure*'s viewed from an overhead angle, as you can see in these screenshots. The stunning three-dimensional graphics are some of the best seen in any game and equal those in the excellent *Virtua Racing*.

The other strange thing is that all the character's moves are controlled via a trackball, rather than a joystick. A device first used in ancient games such as *Missile Command* and Centipede, the trackball provides the player with superb control as Sonic blasts through long and numerous levels.

As well as the trackball, a single button triggers Sonic's spinning jump, useful for destroying enemies and annoying obstacles. With such simple controls, virtually anyone should be able to pick it up.

"But How Much Is It A Go?"

There's no sign of **Tails** in *Sonic Arcade Adventure* but the hedgehog's joined by two animal pals, **Ray** and **Mighty**. With the addition of these characters, up to three players can participate in one game!

Dr Robotnik's pulled out all the stops this time and provides our heroes with more traps and nasty surprises than ever before. Beams of electricity blast from nowhere, huge gears can crush you, robotic foes roam every level and massive chasms must be leapt.

All the characters can perform various feats such as swinging on chains, flying from catapults and leaping onto swinging trapezes. Robotnik himself pops up when you've completed a level, ranting and raving before launching his next assault.

Each massive level features the usual Sonic elements such as hidden items, golden rings and power-ups. The settings range from the heat of an arid desert to the frozen wastes of an ice zone. This game has to be seen to be believed!

Sonic Arcade Adventure should appear in your local arcade at the end of this year so keep your eyes peeled — it's a blast!





with the bonus that none of your friends will have one and even has a cunningly-designed name that looks like 'Sega Disease' if you read it quickly.

Apparently the Discase is 'a stylish and space-saving addition to any room, as well as a snazzy personal accessory that is light in weight and easy to carry around'. However, a mere six CDs — all the case can hold — aren't exactly heavy and difficult to carry, and Mega-CDs don't take up so much space in your room that you have to squirm through your collection to crawl, exhausted but victorious, to your welcoming bed.

The Discase retails at around £13. Carrier bags large enough to hold six CDs are free from countless stores nationwide.

WATCH THE HEDGEHOG

What does 20 nicker buy you these days, eh? A third of a *Sonic CD*? That isn't much use so your money's better spent on a whole fantastic watch.

Yes! You too can be the envy of your mates by *watching* **Sonic** spin into action without suffering epileptic fits or Mary Whitehouse banging on your door. You can spend whole maths lessons admiring the blue fuzzball without 'Teach' saying: 'All right, hand over that Game Gear.' You can… er, well, there's probably loads of novel and exciting things you can do with one of these fantastic doo-dahs.

And to show their kind-hearted generosity, the lads and laddesses at **Inter-City Watch Co Ltd** (who make the watches, as you may have guessed) have donated five of these blue thingies as prizes, so the winners won't have to visit their local H Samuel with a parent's credit card. To be in with a fighting chance, just describe quantum theory in 15 words or less.

Only kidding! You have to answer *this* question to get your grubby mitts on one of these highly-desirable items:

What is the best Mega Drive mag on the market? Is it:
a. Camel Dung Monthly
b. Cheeseboards and Cheeseboardmen Weekly
c. Mega Machines

Send your answer on the back of a postcard or sealed-down envelope to: **Watch The Hedgehog Comp, MEGA MACHINES, Imapct Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**. The first five names drawn out of whatever we can find will win one of the Sonic watches, so don't forget to include your name and address!

If you don't win, don't worry: you can always get one for Christmas. Oh, and thanks for the freebies, Simon — we don't think!

The Amazing Spider-Man Vs Interesting Gameplay is out on import and costs… oh, who gives a toss? Not us

BOOK LATE

Of course, we shouldn't get all immature on these pages. But we do, so we have to point out that **Scholastic Children's Books**, publishers of the ***Sonic The Hedgehog 2 Official Sega Solid Gold Guide***, have their offices in Pratt Street. Very appropriate, really, considering this book — 'the only complete, official, walk-through Mega Drive guide to *Sonic 2*' — has arrived a year too late, so anyone who feels the need to shell out £3.99 must be *really* desperate to finish it.

Sure, this book was written by the software manager for **Sega Europe**, but if, as the book claims, he was the first person in Europe to see it, why couldn't he have got his act together earlier, instead of releasing such a topical book when *Sonic CD*'s just come out and the hype's building for *Sonic 3*?

There's nothing *wrong* with it; it's a comprehensive guide to every nook and cranny of *Sonic 2* and would deserve high commendation if only the game were more recent. Let's hope other *Solid Gold Guide* books in the series cover current games in the same depth, eh?

WICKED, GUY!

Doe-eyed Japanese cartoon violence fans, listen to this! **Manga Video**, purveyors of, er, Manga videos, send a double-barrelled blast of animé straight between your eyes this very month.

First up is *The Heroic Legend Of Arislan (Part II)*, which not surprisingly is the sequel to the Manga blockbuster released earlier in the year. Set in the year 320 AD, the empire of Pulse is mangled by the evil army of Lusitania. The young Prince Arislan is kicked off his throne, but rest assured he's not going out without making a scene.

Assembling a posse of loyalists and warriors, he makes plans for a counter-attack, but their base is infiltrated by the mysterious Silver Mask. *Arislan II* is PG rated and priced at £10.99.

The other Manga offering comes in the shape of *Wicked City*, in which demons and terrorists roam the streets of modern Tokyo (*again*).

A non-aggression pact between the human world and the realm of the demons is up for renewal but nasty terrorists are planning sabotage. The man about to sign on the dotted line, Dr Joseppe Malyart, is the target, and all that stands between future peace and Satan coming down to eat your family are the Black Guards.

Wicked City is out now, priced £12.99, and has an 18 certificate, so presumably our younger readers won't get to see it (knowing wink).

MORE KOMBAT

And sticking with fighting games… We've got the latest info on what's shaping up to be the hottest arcade game of '94. ***Mortal Kombat 2***'s currently being developed by **Bally/Midway**, the folks behind the original coin-op hit.

As with the the first game, *Mortal Kombat 2* features digitised characters battling it out to win the Shaolin Martial Arts Tournament. Expect improved graphics, though, as Midway are rumoured to be making it a 32-bit machine.

The sequel features 14 characters (wait a second, this sounds familiar…), all with their own specialised moves. The original seven fighters return and you'll now be able to control Goro and his master, Shang Tsung.

Rumour has it one of the new fighters will have blades coming out of his body, similar to Pinhead in the *Hellraiser* movies. We also hear that new, gorier death moves will be implemented — Liu Kang, for example, transforms into a dragon and bites opponents in half (the Mary Whitehouse brigade are gonna love this)!

The control set-up's the same so get practising with the original.

In other *Mortal Kombat* news, our contacts inform us there may be two hidden characters in the arcade game. Apparently if you play a Johnny Cage mirror match, use only punches and score a double-flawless victory, a mysterious red ninja called ERMAC appears. He's mega-tough so don't expect to see him for too long.

The other hidden character is rumoured to wear Sonya Blade's outfit. Hmmm, let's hope it's not Goro.

and FinaLLy…

ABSOLUTE… Have MD platform games featuring **Disney**'s **Goofy** and **Rocky & Bullwinkle**, as well as *Super Battletank 2* for the Mega-CD.

VIC TOKAI… This Japanese software company are almost ready to spring *Sonic* clone ***Socket*** on us, as well as ***Time Slip***.

BLACK PEARL: Who? You might not have heard about these guys yet but they're gonna make a big splash next year when they release the Mega Drive conversion of ***Total Carnage***, the sequel to *Smash TV*.


MEGA
ROCKET
ADVENT
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EGA DRIVE

Meet Sparkster...

A new breed of superhero and star of Konami's all new adventure for Sega Megadrive - Rocket Knight Adventures.



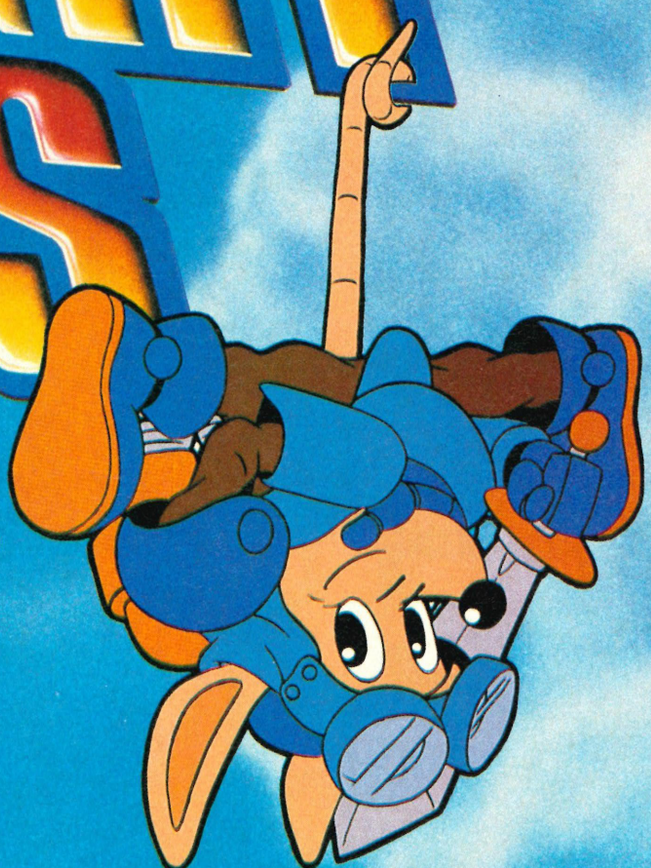








KNIGHT TURES

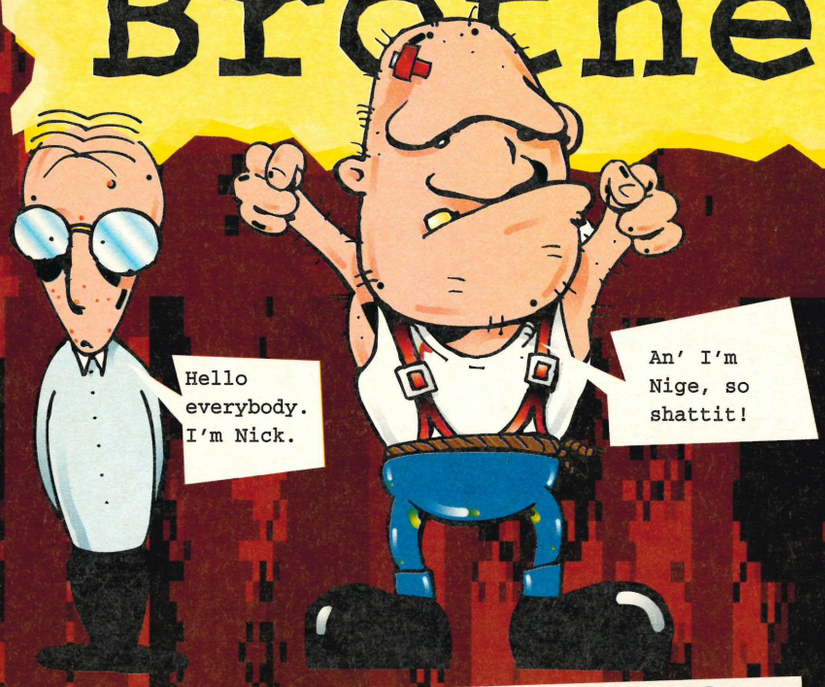


Sparkster is hell bent on avenging his master Mifune's death. Armed with his jet pack and sword of steel his mission is to annihilate the Dark Lord and restore peace to his homeland once more.

KONAMI®

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The Write Brothers!



Putting this mag together raised a lot of interesting questions for the team. Like – why the hell do console magazines have letters pages? For God's sake, are you *really* interested in the rants and wibbles of people with nowt better to do than write in – only to be answered by a couple of sad gits who probably don't even exist? You *are*?! Oh well, you'd better meet Nick 'n' Nige, then.

When Will I Be Famous?

Dear Nick and Nige
Last month, at a hush-hush location in Oxford, I was a contestant on the third series of *Gamesmaster*. Here's how I got on the programme.

A few months ago, I was in the sitting room eating a bowl of Crunchy Nut Cornflakes while reading Teletext, when up came a page that read, 'Would you like to be on *Gamesmaster*?' I grabbed a pen and paper, wrote down my best games scores and sent them off.

While watching *Games World* a few weeks later, I received a phone call from someone called Richard Wilcox, who told me I had been one of 200 people selected for an audition. The Friday before my audition, I travelled down to London with my favourite MD game, *Speedball 2*.

The people down at *Gamesmaster* obviously didn't want uninvited gamers coming to the audition so they were held in Lisson Grove, a small youth club that looked abandoned.

Inside the club were about 40 people and tables with an Amiga, SNES and Mega Drive on top. I had to fill in a form, saying what consoles I have, what my favourite games are, my favourite TV programmes etc, then came a 45-minute wait for my audition.



Just Chin The Git!

Dear Write Brothers
Can you help me? I have got a Mega Drive and it's ace, but my mate Phil's got a SNES and he reckons it's miles better. He just goes on about Mode 7 and the joypad and all the millions of colours all the time. He makes me sick. I know the Mega Drive runs tings [pardon? —Nick & Nige] but he just goes on about the technical side of things all the time.

Could you list all the reasons why the Mega Drive is the best console out, so I could shut him up for good?
Ahsen Bhatti, Sudbury, London

Nige: ***Look, Ahsen mate, take a tip from your Uncle Nige. You don't need to know why the Mega Drive is better.***

Next time he goes on about the SNES, you do what I do — grab hold of the little sod and give him a good kicking! He can't go on about Mode 7 when his jaws are wired up! [Editor's Note: MEGA MACHINES can in no way be held responsible for any loss, damage or injury which may be incurred by readers stupid enough to follow the advice of our imaginary staff. Thank you.]

Nick: ***There's no need for that, Nige. Anyway, Ahsen, I could bore you with reams of technical information, but why bother? You can't get*** **Sonic** ***on the SNES, can you? And you can't get a CD attachment for the SNES, either. The games are cheaper on the whole, and have you seen the SNES version of*** **Sensible Soccer** ***compared to the Mega Drive version?***

Nige: ***Yeah, and you can't rip that bloke's head off in*** **Mortal Kombat** ***on the SNES either. What's the point of that?***

Nick: ***Even if your mate disagrees, you still get to play each other's games, so you're getting the best of both worlds. Okay?***

Nige: ***I still reckon you should smack him one, though...***

NIGE: Our designer's a prat! He's cut this letter in arf, so you'll 'ave to go to page 62 to read da rest. Bah

Nick: *Hello friends, and welcome from The Write Brothers. I'm Nick — not that nice Mr Lawrence, you understand — and this is my brother, Nigel.*
Nige: *Yeah, right... 'Allo, wasters...* burp!
Nick: *Don't worry about Nigel. He smells a bit and indulges in foul language from time to time but he's got a heart of gold, somewhere.*
Nige: Paaaarp!
Nick: *Oh dear.*

Our pages appear throughout the mag and are full of helpful advice and observations from you, the readers. If you've anything to contribute, send it to: ***The Write Brothers, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.***

That's enough chatter...

Nige: *Hang on a sec, if this is the first issue, where the hell have you got the letters from to answer this month?*
Nick: *Well, Nigel, I'm really pleased that you asked that valid question. The letters for this section have been kindly loaned to us by our dear friends on SEGA FORCE MEGA, just to get us started. I just put 'Dear Write Brothers' at the start of each...*
Nige: *So you nicked them, Nick?*
Nick: *Well, no, not exactly. We've borrowed them.*
Nige: *Borrowed from SEGA FORCE MEGA? Impossible. Their editor is so tight, if you stuck a lump of coal up his arse you'd have a diamond before the weekend.*
Nick: *Quite. Anyway, time to press on...*
Nige: *...As Claire Raynor would say!*
Nick: *Err...*
Nige: Paaaarp!

ETERNAL GRATITUDE



Dear Write Brothers
I know how hard it is to answer everybody's questions but please try and answer these and I will be eternally grateful:
1. Will there be any compos for the Mega-CD 2?
2. Will there be a *Cool Spot 2*?
3. Are there any cheats for *Sonic 1* on the Game Gear?
4. Will *Street Fighter II* come out on the Game Gear?
Elton Wells, Pimlico, London

Nick: *No problem, only too happy to oblige:*
1. *Yes, there's a compo to win one of these cool little devices on page 12, courtesy of Psygnosis.*
2. *The follow-up to the massively-popular* Cool Spot *is called* Cool Spot Goes To Hollywood *but it won't see the light of day until next year.*
3. *Write in to Dr Ruthless's Tips Clinic and he'll relieve your ailment. Send a photo and that might see print, too!*
4. *I'm afraid there are no plans to release* Street Fighter II *on the Game Gear. Please accept my apologies.*
Nige: *Please accept my fist in your mush!*
Nick: Ooyah!

Disrespect Going Out To Fat Dave



Dear Write Brothers
Could you do us a massive favour and tell our mate to sort his life out? He's called Fat Dave and all he does is sit around his bedroom in his blue dressing gown playing *Powermonger* all day. That's his life, basically.

He never lets any of us have a go on anything else. And more often than not, when we go round his house for a chill, all we end up doing is watching him playing *Powermonger* for a couple of hours. He's so sad, when he got to the final island, he taped it on his video recorder for posterity! All four hours of it!

So could someone tell him to seriously think about getting a life?
Davey, Gareth and Damian, Hanworth, Middx.

Nick: *Oh dear...*
Nige: *He actually* taped Powermonger*? Sad man!*
Nick: *It might be an idea to ask our readers if they have any friends who have a bizarre attachment to certain Mega Drive games, Nige. Y'know, people who've been late for important appointments because they just* had *to finish the last level of* Jungle Strike *or something like that.*
Nige: *Gleamin' idea! Why don't you ask 'em?*
Nick: *I just did, mate.*
Nige: *Oh.*

NAFF NEWSIE OF THE MONTH!

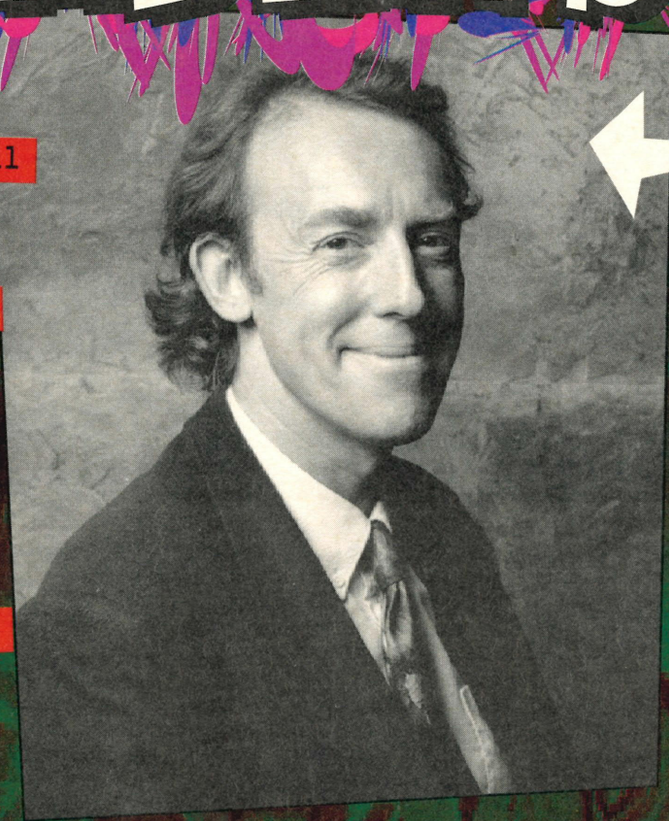
Nick: *Here at MEGA MACHINES, we feel everyone deserves their place in the sun. To be held up in esteem for the nation to appreciate and cherish. Yes, it's time for all the miserable paper shop owners in Britain to stand up and be counted. You know the sort: the ones who only let two of you in at a time in case you strip the shelves of Kinder Surprise and* Sexy Donkey Monthly*...*
Nige: *Ey, I've got that one! It's gleamin'!*
Nige: *...Or the ones who won't give you any change for the bus, or — most heinous of all! — refusing to stock MEGA MACHINES, or tucking it behind lesser magazines. We want these heroic figures lionized in the pages of this mag... and that's where* you *come in.*
Nige: *...Yer pants! Geddit? Hur hur hur!*
Nick: *Steady on, Nige. Anyway, if your local newsagent is a downright misery, take a photo and send it to us at:* Naff Newsie Of The Month Award, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW, *with your reason why s/he should be considered for such an honour.*

Every month, we choose a winner who'll go on to our Grand Final, which is scheduled to be held at the Mansfield Labour Club (providing we don't get double-booked with Five Star, that is) at Christmas 1994.



THE LEADER SPEAKS

It's no secret console games are big business. Why then, if Sega sell so many, are games expensive? It's a question so many of us ask, but do we *really* know the answer? With this in mind, ADRIAN PITT visited Sega Europe's headquarters in London and spoke to managing director Nick Alexander to dispel a few myths and come up with some good, honest answers.



This man doesn't *want* to charge you 50 quid for a cart – so why does he? It's all here, folks!

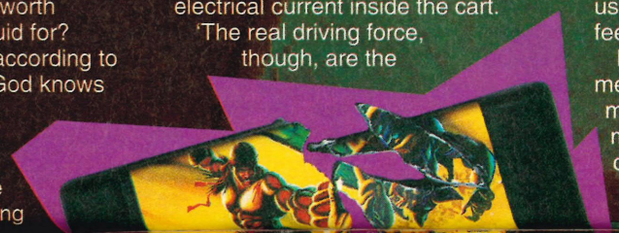
It's a funny old world. Thousands upon thousands of people pay £90 for a pair of training shoes without giving the price a second thought. And what can you do with trainers apart from wear them or turn them into a couple of ornamental plant pots?!

So why all the furore about spending *half* that price on a console game? Shame on you! Console games are entertainment. Fun for all the family. Some are educational. They keep the young un's off the streets. Surely all *that's* worth shelling-out nearly 50 quid for?

Well... errr... not so, according to the world, his wife and God knows how many millions of Sonic-mad, Cool Spot-loving kids. In all my time working on console game magazines, chatting director of **Sega Europe**. Sitting on a mint green sofa, in his smart office at Sega HQ, I couldn't help but think what an incredibly nice man he his. 'If he's a rip-off merchant,' I thought, 'I'll eat one of these cushions!'

'There's a printed circuit board inside every cart,' Nick explained. 'This is the bit everything plugs into. It's like a Central Nervous System. There are a couple of very small resistors that control the amount of electrical current inside the cart.

'The real driving force, though, are the



Some of you may remember uproar a few months back when it was revealed the cartridges themselves don't cost all that much to put together.

Which is true. There's a £12–14 raw manual cost on each unit. Big money, huh? Well, if the whole caboodle were left at just raw costs, us gamers *and* our purses wouldn't feel the pinch.

However, there *are* other elements involved that push prices up more than a smidgen and one element in particular Sega have no control over whatsoever

'Games produced three or four years ago had about 1 Meg of been for quite a while, the yen's worth more than our lubbly-jubbly pound and Sega have to pay more for their carts.

For example, a year ago, something Sega paid 10,000 yen for cost them £44. Today, 10,000 translates to £62.50 over here — an increase of 40%.

'And there's absolutely nothing we can do about it!' cries Nick, with a look of sheer frustration. He's right, you know. These exchange rates ride up more times than the Lone Ranger! 'Plus we have to pay duty tax of 5.6 per cent on top of anything we ship over,' he says with a sigh.

So, have Sega looked into ways of keeping cart prices down?

'Well, we *could* make smaller games,' says Nick with a smile, 'but that's not what people want.

'What we *are* doing is starting to assemble our carts in Europe. We *still* ship-in our chips from the Far East, but because they're only small items, we don't pay duty. We'll purchase all other materials, such as plastics and paper this side of the water and the actual physical process of putting the carts together will be carried out here in the UK.



'There *is* evidence that some consumers believe that,' says Nick, 'but I don't think that belief should be pushed too far.'

He laughs, 'There was this mystique, wasn't there, with *Street Fighter II* on the Super Nintendo. It was one of the most expensive console games around and there was that air of "I've got to have it because it's *so* expensive"!'

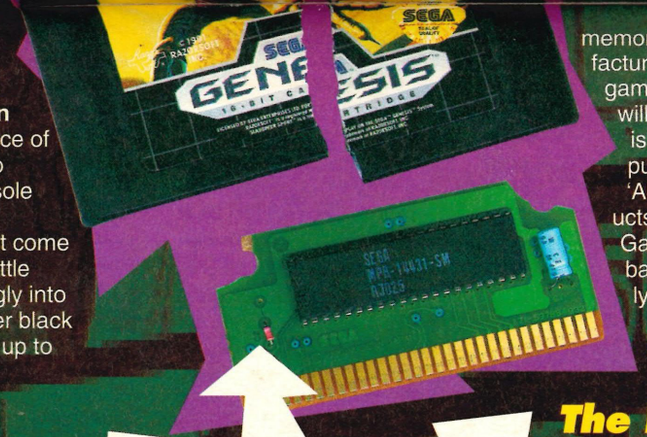
Would it be right to say a game's worth every penny if it offers great playability and, more importantly, is something you're going to want to go back to time and time again?

'Oh yes! It's essential people get value for money. They don't want to spend nearly £50 on a game then get bored with it. If it gives two to three months enjoyment, I'd say that's value for money.

'Also, cart games are durable. They've a good residual value for swapping. The classified ads sections of magazines are filled with games to swap.'

to readers on the phone and leaping out from behind perspex shelving in music stores with the likes of our **Caught in the Act** questionnaire, the price of software has been an ever-so large thorn in the side of console gamers nationwide.

So why is it most of us can't come to terms with the idea that a little black plastic box, fitting snuggly into a slightly larger, slightly shinier black plastic box can cost anything up to half of a hundred pounds?



Outrageous?

Wait a sec — what did I say? HALF OF A HUNDRED POUNDS? Oh my God — 50 smackeroonies for a black square thing with a big slit in the bottom? It's a rip-off! It's a *total* rip-off!

Calm down! Calm down! If you look at it *that* way, it's no wonder the anti-Sega virus starts creeping through our veins. Maybe it's time to take a look at these little black plastic boxes? Perhaps what's hidden inside determines the price tag?

Who better to tell us what lies in the middle of a cartridge sandwich than **Nick Alexander**, managing

We just *had* to find out for ourselves what's inside. The game's a pile of crap anyway!

ROM (Read Only Memory) chips. These contain the game programming. All the other elements I've explained are standard. Only the number of ROM chips differs, depending on the capability of the game.'

Japan vs UK

All sounds pretty impressive, Nick, but not altogether very expensive.

memory and cost £3–4 to manufacture,' says Nick. 'The major games around this Christmas will be 16 and 24 Meg. This is one of the things that has pushed game prices up.

'Also, several of our products now have a "Save Game" facility. These battery back-up units are quite costly to produce.'

Cue melodramatic music. Enter stage left 'The Sting Element'.

The big yen

Sega's carts are manufactured in the Far East. They are then sold to Sega, not in pounds and pence — the good old pound sterling, as we know it — but in the Japanese currency: the yen. If sterling's weak against the yen, as it has

'This process also minimises the exchange rate risk. If the yen continues to strengthen, we've isolated ourselves, in a way.'

The price of software

So who decides the price of software? A bloke called Jake with a lazy eye? The Prime Minister? Nick himself?

'Sega set the prices on a European basis,' the top man told me. 'Our senior management group meets every so often to discuss pricing, along with the managing directors of our subsidiary companies right across Europe. There are 14 people in all.

'We have to look at all elements and say, "Well, it costs us this much, we have to sell it for this much." If there's a time when a particular game comes along and the usual pricing formula doesn't seem appropriate, the group get together to discuss a suitable price.

'We have to consider that £70 is too much, so what *should* we charge? For example, games we put £45 price tags on 12 months ago should *now* have £63 price tags, yet we're selling them for £50. We've absorbed the cost increase and seen our profitability diminish considerably as a result.

'Third party publishers — ie, Virgin, Electronic Arts etc — decide what they want to charge for a game but are influenced by the price of Sega brand products. These companies suffer the same pricing problems as us.'

The bigger the better?

In terms of memory size, games have definitely got bigger. Last Christmas, the major games were 8 Meg. This Yuletide, contenders for the Number One spot will be 16 Meg and, in the case of MD *Street Fighter II*, 24 Meg.

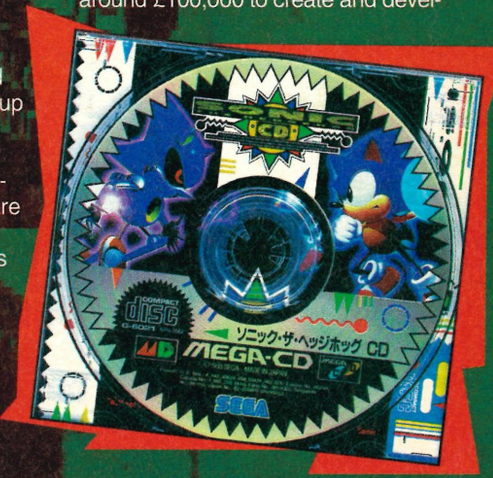
As Nick explained, prices have risen because of this, but do people really think they're getting a better game because they've paid more for it?

Cheap CD games?

And what about the Mega-CD? Surely the more the machine's potential is tapped, the greater the price of games?

'Not necessarily,' frowns Nick. 'The development and creation costs of a Mega-CD game are a lot higher than those for a cartridge game.

'Let's say a cartridge game costs around £100,000 to create and develop. A Mega-CD game costs £500,000. Say the cart game sells 500,000 units worldwide — the development cost for every game sold is roughly 10 pence. The Mega-CD game sells 50,000 copies worldwide. The development cost for each game is £10.



'As we sell more Mega-CD machines, the creation and development costs for each game sold will decrease. We should be able to see the price of CD games much, much lower than cart games are now. It's our great hope CD prices will come down.

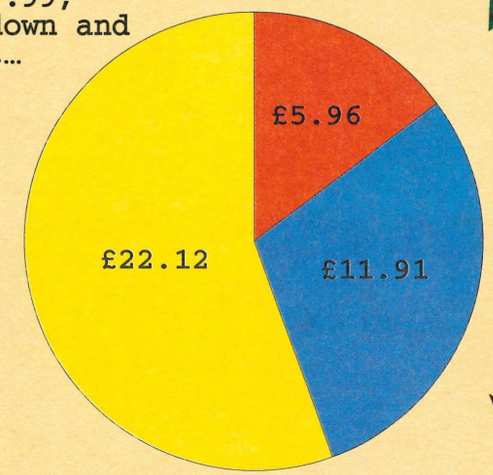
'What we *have* to keep under control are those creation and development costs. People talk about interactive movies. Well, they cost millions to produce! We have to try and stop those costs escalating.'

Sega vs The Commons

The concern over software pricing hit the headlines yet again earlier this year as Members of Parliament demanded an investigation into the cost of Sega and Nintendo software. Does Nick worry when MPs get on their soap-boxes?

Where your money goes...

Ever wondered what happens to the money you spend on a console game? Here's the answer! Let's take a Mega Drive game at £39.99, break the price down and see who gets what...



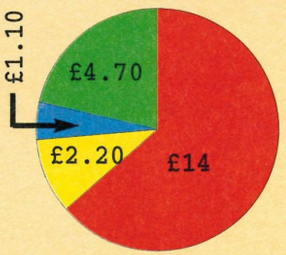
£5.96 goes to the nasty VAT man — not even Sega escape *his* wrath!

£11.91 to Mr Shopkeeper — that's the retailer's margin

£22.12 is the grand total Sega receive

What Sega do with £22.12...

Okay, we now know where our 40 quid ends up. What do Sega do with the money *they* receive?



£14 on landed cost; manufacture, shipping etc

£2.20 from each game sold goes to marketing

£1.10 from each game goes on distribution, sending stuff to warehouses etc

£4.70 from each game goes to subsidise hardware sales

'We *do* get a lot of flak. We're told we'd sell a lot more games if they were £30, but when we meet with MPs and talk about the things you and I have discussed today, they usually say, "Aaaaah! We see the problem".

'We *always* listen to the public. Of course we do. It's a frustrating situation. Hopefully software prices won't rise. We make nothing on hardware, we've tried to make money on software. I think hardware prices *will* rise, which should keep software prices down.'

I was interested to hear what Nick thought about other machines coming onto the market — CDi, 3D0 and so on — and whether Sega could compete price-wise.

'People haven't really got very excited about CDi.

'3DO is interesting, but it's too expensive to be mass market. In a year's time, we *may* be concerned about it. From a price point and initial software, it's going to take them about 18 months to get motoring, then we'll be competing head to head.'

The future...

There was one last question I *had* to put to Nick. It came to me on the journey down to London.

I don't know about you, but when I was younger I owned an Atari 2600 console. Back in 1981, the games cost over £30. Suddenly, as if overnight, you could stroll into any computer shop and pick up one of the carts for as little as eight quid! The bubble had burst.

Is Nick worried the same thing could happen again? Is he concerned consumers will stop buying software?

'Of course I am! Of course I am! I think everyone's learnt a lesson from what happened then. If you think about it, £30 was an even bigger price to pay for something in those days.

'In 1981–82, the technology wasn't as good as it is today. Publishers were just throwing out products — some even had bugs! Their next product would be almost identical to the last. The consumer would think, "Hmmmm... I won't be buying another game", and I don't blame them! The market potential was there but publishers wouldn't invest in creation.

'Nintendo came along and ensured each game released met a quality threshold. Sega adopted the same policy. We have to watch that there's not too much of the same product out there.

'We should be heading for fewer, better titles or consumers will turn their backs on us. That's what happened in the early '80s. There's no room for complacency. We have to continue to invest in ground-breaking products. Games like *Aladdin* give hope. Investing in research and development is the way forward.

'The industry goes into Christmas in a reasonably good state. The strength of the yen, though, is *still* our biggest worry.'

Well, Nick Alexander certainly left me with a few things to chew over. Fortunately, the list *didn't* include mint green leather cushions!

It's certainly interesting to hear things from the other side of the fence and discover the various elements involved in determining the price of software, but I'm sure this isn't the last we've heard of the debate.

What *should* we be paying for console games? What price tag would *you* put on a game? Would you consider paying £60 for a cart? Has what Nick Alexander said changed your feelings on the price of software?

Over to you...

HANG ON! I WANT *MY* SAY...

Being a gamer isn't always plain sailing. One of the biggest headaches is actually shelling-out the old wonga for the latest and greatest console game. So what do *you* folk reckon to the price of software? Are you satisfied paying £45 for a new release? If not – what *would* you be prepared to pay? We contacted a selection of gamers from our reader panel and flung a couple or three controversial questions at them.

THIRD PARTY WORDS

Sega aren't the only ones out there producing games. Companies like Accolade, Domark and US Gold are competing head-to-head in the console gaming market. We've heard how Sega go about pricing their games and the problems they face, but what about the other publishing companies? Are they all in the same boat? Let's find out...

DOMARK

Anne Dixon, Sales and Marketing Manager at Domark

Anne, what elements do you look at in a Mega Drive game to determine its price?
Primary cost factors are Meg size, the cost of the code, licence and marketing spend. In terms of value for money, one needs to consider the target audience, the game type and competitive prices.

Who at your company decides the price of the games you release?
Currently, Sega are heavily involved. Once Domark handles its own distribution, from March next year, then I will.

What sort of problems do you encounter when it comes to pricing software? Sega, for example, worry about the strength of the yen against the pound.
The yen has been and will continue to be a huge factor. Manufacturing prices are also a major concern.

The move to compact discs will be vastly beneficial to the consumer and all of us involved in the creation and distribution of software.

Would your company consider releasing a £50 or £60 game?
If it really justified it — but it *has* to be exceptional at that price.

US GOLD®

Peter Hawthorn, Operations Manager at US Gold

Europe, US Gold buys the games from Japan in yen. The cost of games has therefore gone up. Send all complaints to John Major!

Andrew Storr, Bournemouth



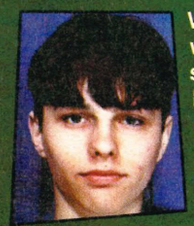
What do you think about the price of software, Andrew?
It seems to be going up all the time and it shouldn't be. I was happy to pay between £35–40, but I won't pay now that prices are going up.

Do you buy many games?
No. I don't buy games any more, I exchange them.

Would you pay £60 for a game if it was hyped as 'the next big thing'?
I won't be getting *Street Fighter II*, if that's what you mean! There's no way I'd pay 60 quid.

The last game I *did* buy was *Shining Force* for 50 quid. I knew it was an RPG, it'd last a long time and I'd get value for money.

Clifton Burrows, Glasgow



What price tag would *you* put on software, Clifton?
Probably £30 is a good price to pay. I think £39.99 is a bit too expensive. I usually pay between £25 and £30 for a game because I know someone who works in a shop!

Do you buy many games?
Not really. I mostly swap them. If I want to add a new game to my collection, I'll get one about every two or three months.

Would you be prepared to pay 60 quid for a cart?
Errrr... probably. Yes, I think I *would* if the game was very good.

Ben Tucker, London

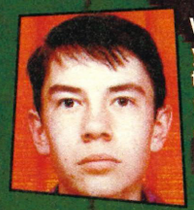


Ben, what do you reckon to the price of Mega Drive games?
I think £40 is a reasonable price to pay.

How often do you buy a game?
Usually I get one a month.

Would you shell-out £60 for a Mega Drive cart?
Yeah, I think I would. I'd have to save up first, though!

Adrian Quinn, Fife



What are your thoughts on the price of console games?
Well, from a basic point of view, I think the prices are over-inflated. I've an idea what they cost to make and it's nowhere near £40. I think £45–50 is a ludicrous price to pay for a game.

So you definitely wouldn't consider paying £60 for a cart, even it was hyped as something really corking?
I'd definitely think twice! If there were two games in a pack, *then* I'd pay £60.

What sort of price tag would you put on Mega Drive carts?
I'd be happier — not satisfied, mind — but happier paying 30 quid.

Wayne Roberts, Birmingham



What machine have you got, Wayne?
I own a Mega Drive and I might be getting a Mega-CD for Christmas.

What do you think about the price of MD games?
They're a bit expensive, but if you want the best, you've got to pay.

How often do you buy a game?
When I can afford one. I used to get a cart about once every two weeks, but not any more.

Is £60 too much to pay?
I'd pay 60 quid if the game was really, really special. As I said, you have to pay for the best.

Peter Turner, Wiltshire



What do you think to the price of software at the moment?
Very expensive. I think the prices are excessive, really.

I hear the carts only cost about £10 to produce. I'd be happy to pay £30.

Do you buy many games?
Not really. I've had my Mega Drive for a year now and I've only bought three games because they're so costly.

What about 60 quid for a cart? Would you consider paying that?
No! That's nearly half the price of a Mega Drive. Definitely not.

What are the issues that determine the price of a Mega Drive game?
The key issues affecting software prices are:

a: Consumer requirements. Consumers are demanding games with more depth, more of a challenge and better graphics. To meet their demands, publishers are i) spending more on developing (or programming) the games, and ii) creating games using more memory capacity. Mega Drive games are now 16 Meg or more. There are clear benefits to the consumer, eg, i) *Robocod* MS/GG are almost identical to the Mega Drive version because they're 4 Meg, just like the Mega Drive game, and ii) Mega Drive *Flashback* wouldn't have been possible on 8 Meg.

b: Exchange rate. Just like Sega

Who decides the price of games you release at US Gold?
The pricing of a game is a joint decision between marketing people, sales people and accountants. Sega Europe are also involved and give us their opinion.

Basically, we want to make money so we can develop and release new games, but we also aim to give value for money.

Would US Gold consider charging £50 for a game?
If consumers want a game using the latest technology, largest memory capacity, more in-depth gameplay and are prepared to pay for that, US Gold will produce that. US Gold would not publish games for £50, £60 — whatever — unless people wanted to buy them.

ACCOLADE™

Tim Christian, Managing Director of Accolade

Tim, what do Accolade look at when they set the price of one of their releases?
I guess there are three main elements. The product itself, how much it cost to develop — what size the game is, in other words. We add into that the licence, if it's a big one — we've produced games such as *Jack Nicklaus* and *Pelé*. Finally, we look at the average price of games in the marketplace.

Who at Accolade decides the price of cart games?
We decide between ourselves, the marketing people and myself. We like to keep our Mega Drive titles at £39.99, because I feel that's the right price to pay.

Do you encounter the same problems as Sega, when it comes to pricing software?
We're a little bit different to Sega. We manufacture a certain amount of our own Mega Drive products.

Currency is *still* a worry. The pound weakening against the dollar or Far East currency *is* a concern.

Have Accolade thought about releasing a game at, say, £50?
We haven't so far. The biggest game we've released is 16 Meg with battery back-up. I think as memory size increases, as we get into 24 Meg and 32 Meg, there's a possibility prices will go that way.

I think, from gut feeling, £50 or £60 is just *too* much to pay.

NOW HAVE *YOUR* SAY

Now you've heard the main man's wise words, have your thoughts on the price of software changed? Has Nick Alexander put your mind at rest, or do you reckon there's *still* cause for many a heated debated? Who do *you* agree with? Sega and the third parties, or the gamers on our reader panel? Now's the chance to have your say. If you can get any sense out of Nick and Nige, drop them a line at the usual address and, if they're in a good mood, our dynamic duo will see fit to print all your comments. Let the debate begin!

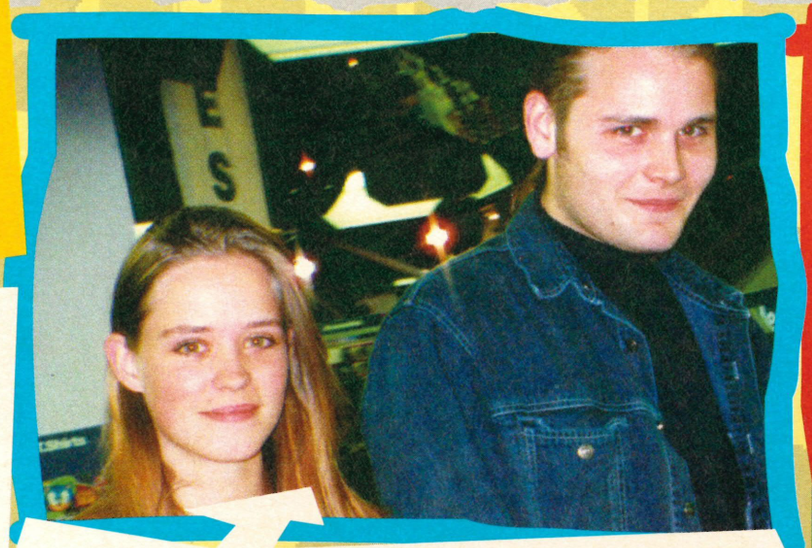
CAUGHT

in the act!

Cockney REBELS!

Say cheese!

The MEGA MACHINES roadies are all set for a face-to-face confrontation with Joe Public and his wife. Their mission brief is simple: Storm HMV Oxford Circus, grab a load of Sega gamers and ask impertinent questions. This is a regular feature in the mag, so if you're in a music, games or video store anywhere in the UK, keep your eyes peeled – we could be there, too! Thanks to this month's victims at HMV and, if you'd like us to target your home town, drop us a line...



Jamie Shipperly, age 19 from Middlesex, with his girlfriend, Kerry (she's the one on the left! –Ed); Jamie answered the questions

What's your favourite Sega game? Streets of Rage II.
What's the worst game you've played? Got to be Fatal Fury.
Are you considering buying a Mega-CD? It hadn't crossed my mind.
How much do you spend on games? I don't, really. I tend to rent them.
What are your thoughts on the price of games? They're far too expensive.
Have you any hobbies? Playing the guitar and video games, of course!
What's your favourite TV programme? Grange Hill — the early years!



Zool, several trillion years old. He's not a bank clerk and he doesn't live in Melton Mowbray

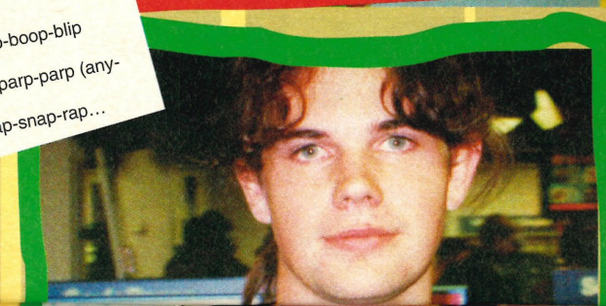
What's your favourite MD game? Blip-blippety-boop-boop-blip (ahem! —Ed).
What's your favourite type of game? Snip-zippety-parp-parp (any-one speak Zoolese? —Ed).
Have you seen the Mega-CD? Splap-crappety-bap-snap-rap... (aaaarrgggghhh! Forget it! —Ed).

Sarah, age 14 from London, a student at Waldegrave School

How much pocket money do you get? 25 quid a week (crikey! One rich lady! —Ed).
How often do you buy a game? I don't — I wait till my friends give me them!
What's your fave MD game? Sonic. I've got to say that, haven't I?!
What are the worst games you've played? Hmmmm! Oh yeah, Ecco: The Dolphin and Euro Club Soccer.
What makes a good game? The graphics, presentation and a good storyline.
Got any hobbies? Sure. Drawing, listening to music and checking-out lads!
Anything else you want to say? Yeah! Hi to Sharon and Kelly. Hello to Joan at the Reject Shop and all the good-looking lads out there. Oh, and can I just say to Melissa... (Ahem! We'll censor that, thank you —Ed).









Simon Parry, age 26, a Star Trek-loving bank clerk from Newton Abbot

What's your favourite MD game? John Madden '93.
Have you played any really crap games? No. I haven't had my MD for long and all the games I've seen have been pretty good.
What elements make a good game? A game that changes every time and has loads of player input.
Have you seen the Mega-CD? Yes. I've drooled over it but haven't seen any games yet.
What game will you buy next? Dunno. I'll have a look through a few games mags first.
What are you having for tea tonight? Lasagne.
Who do you listen to on your Walkman®? Queen.

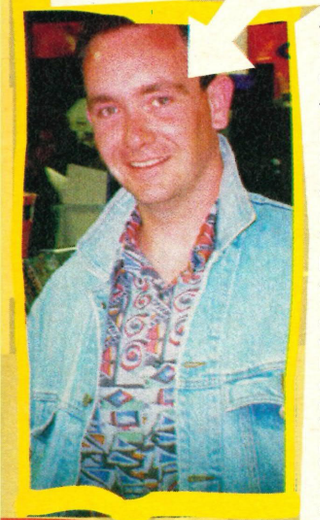


HMV Oxford Circus in all its glory, our first target for Caught in the Act. The store has recently expanded with the addition of Level One, the world's biggest games department. With a futuristic decor and state-of-the-art features, including special lighting FX, a translucent glass wall, huge video screens and a games challenge area, this is the gaming experience. Worth checking out when you're in the big city.



Noel Edghill, age 20 from Ealing, a sweet and innocent postman and Iron Maiden fan!

What's your favourite MD game? Super Monaco. I love car games.
What do you think makes a good game? It has to have loads of options.
Are you going to buy a Mega-CD? I may do. They look quite good. I'll wait for more games to come out first.
What game will you buy next? Probably Super Monaco 2.
Do you like cheeseburgers? Sure do! They're my favourite food. Unhealthy, I know!
What's your fave TV prog? Scooby Doo.
Who do you listen to on your Walkman®? Bon Jovi.



Andrew Leigh, age 24 from London – an Accounts Officer (watch him, a man with brains –Ed)

Have you got a girlfriend/ boyfriend? Yes (what was that I said about brains?! — Ed).
What's your favourite MD game? Jungle Strike.
What's the worst MD game you've played? 688 Attack Sub (here here! — Ade).
Do you intend to buy a Mega-CD? If something decent comes out for it. I'll wait for Silpheed.
How often do you buy a game? Usually once a month. Depends what's coming out.
What game are you buying next? Mortal Kombat — definitely.
What do you do in your spare time? Paintball and martial arts (uh-oh! I'm outta here! —Ade).





Marion John, age 23 from Hampton. She's a PA (what? A loudspeaker or a Personal Assistant?! –Ed) and that's her boyfriend, Chris – he's not a game fanatic!

What are your favourite MD games? Ecco and Flashback.
What makes a good game? It's got to have style and represent something realistic.
What do you think of the Mega-CD? I don't think the technology's being used properly.
And the price of games? Far too high, considering the market they're aimed at. I'm glad to see prices coming down a bit.
What's the next game you'll buy? Cool Spot.
What do you watch on TV? Casualty.
What music are you into? Errrr… just put Madonna.
Anything else before you go? Say hello to my brother, Robert. He's another Sega fanatic!



Brian Cooper, age 23 from London – he goes to Southwark College (oh no! I could do with a Dunkin' Donut right now! –Brian)

Have you got a girlfriend? No! My MD's far more important. It doesn't answer back!
What are your fave MD games? Hmmmm… John Madden '92… errrr… Euro Club Soccer and, oh yeah — Risky Woods, that's pretty good.
What are your favourite type of games? Sports games (surprise, surprise! —Ed).
What elements make a good game? Graphics, obviously. It must be realistic and have fun music.
Have you seen the Mega-CD? Yeah. I'll get one if the price is right.
What do you reckon to the price of games? 45 quid's a bit steep. They've got to be really playable to be worth that much.
What music do you listen to? Anything but Rave. I can't stand Rave.

THE REVIEW BOARD!

Some games are good, some are crap! No, scratch that. Some games are good, a lot of games are crap! And who wants to be lumbered with a game that's a complete load of crap? No one, no way, uh-uh. That's why we're here. We are your eyes and ears in the software market. We play the games and tell you what we reckon before you wave your wad about down your local Sega stockist. And hey, you can trust us; we know exactly what we're doing. Now which hole does this thing go in again...?

The Ratings Box Revealed

A few mags review games then translate their findings into knob, dial, LED and graph language. We reckon: why bother? If you want that all-important break down of ratings, we'll give it to you — not turn it into a sodding Dulux colour chart, or Houston Control. We just award a percentage mark for each facet of the game, and work out the average of everyone's comments for an overall rating. Simple — but effective (unlike Al, who's simple and *defective*!). Anyway, on a lighter note, meet the guys who're gonna do your dirty work each month — their identities, you'll notice, have been subtly disguised in order to prevent 'em from getting mobbed in the streets by readers after free games:

The 'Buy This Game' Award

Does 'Gold Specially Selected Editor's Gold Choice of the Month Shining Gold Award' ring any bells? That's the kind of thing that's slapped on reviews when they're considered to be 'rather good'. But what is it they're all trying to say? How

Culture Corner

Welcome to Culture Corner. This is dedicated to the more sophisticated readers. This month's poems have been written by a local drunk in exchange for a cup of coffee from our drinks machine. These poems should be read aloud in a Scottish accent, whilst staggering about, to extract the full message from deep within these superb pieces of literature. Take it away, Bruce.

Title: Dinner With Dave

There was a young girlie called Jess,
Who bought a Super N.E.S.
When told, 'That was dumb!'
She stuck her head up her bum,
She didn't know Segas cost twenty quid less!

Title: Autumn Within

There was a young fellow named Rob,
Who felt overworked in his job.
His mum bought him a NES,
To relieve some of the stress,
But he played it and felt a complete nob.

Ode To Sega

Sega is good,
Nintendo is crap!
Now give us me cuppa,
Or I'll puke on your lap.

Thank you, Bruce. Are you feeling the bursting desire to express *yourself* through an art? Yes? Then use this as your soap box, your gallery, your outlet (your toilet? —Ed). Send your works into us, here at **Culture Corner, Mega Machines, Impact Magazines, Impact magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.** We'll do our best to print it, be it pictures, poems or photos of your sister in the shower. So let those juices flow. Create, create, create!

Up for review this month:


30 The Addams Family


32 Sensible Soccer


36 RoboCop vs. The Terminator


40 Cosmic Spacehead


42 Zool


46 Spider-Man and The X-Men


48 Aladdin


52 F-15 II


54 Street Fighter II


58


69


70


72

GRAPHICS	34
SOUND	28
PLAYABILITY	79
LASTABILITY	54
ORIGINALITY	61
OVERALL	69

about, umm, oh I dunno, 'buy this game', perhaps? Yeeee-hhhaaaaaah! Bingo! Ta-dah! And that's what you've got...

The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!


James Pond 3


The Lost Vikings


Asterix


WWF Royal Rumble

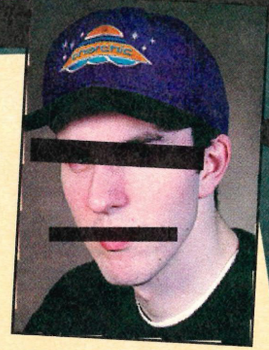

74
Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles Tournament Fighters


92
Sonic CD


96
Silpheed


98
Dune CD

Name: Mat Yeo
Age: 23 and a half
Title: News Editor/Regular 90's guy
Qualifications: Won a 'Decorate Mr Potato Head' Compo
Favourite game: Street Fighter 2
Worst playground injury: Lost an eyebrow in a bizarre swing incident
Best excuse for being late to work: His first coffee of the morning wasn't strong enough







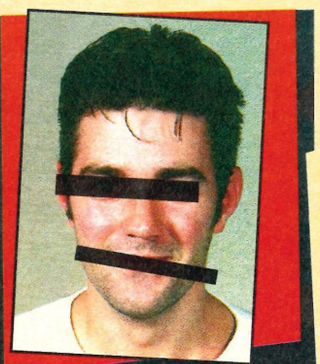
Name: James Beaven
Age: 22 and a bit
Title: Reviews Editor/Organ Grinder
Qualifications: Bronze, silver and gold swimming awards
Favourite game: Playing chicken using company cars
Worst playground injury: Got kicked in the nuts by this really hideous girl whilst playing 'kiss touch'
Best excuse for being late to work: Could never think of one in time



Name: Nick Lawrence
Age: 18
Title: Staff Writer/Monkey#2
Qualifications: Won a game of conkers, once
Favourite game: Umm...
Worst playground injury: Got twatted by a marble in Junior school
Best excuse for being late to work: Al didn't wake him up (Double ahem!)

Name: Warren Lapworth
Age: 24
Title: Sub Editor/Human spell-checker
Qualifications: Owns a Collins Gem pocket dictionary
Favourite game: Life
Worst playground injury: Scabbed knees double-whammy
Best excuse for being late to work: 'It's not as if I get paid or anything'

Name: Steve Shields
Age: 29
Title: Managing Editor/Huge Organ Grinder
Qualifications: Big mouth
Favourite game: Trying to pee the fag-end down the hole in the urinals
Worst playground injury: None. No one would touch him
Best excuse for being late to work: Doesn't need one





Name: Alan Needham
Age: 25
Title: Staff Writer/Monkey#1
Qualifications: Degree in Advanced English and Drama. (Yawn!)
Favourite game: Sensible Soccer
Worst playground injury: Fell off the top of a slide
Best excuse for being late to work: Nick wouldn't get up. (Ahem)



Name: Adrian Pitt
Age: Older than you, sonny!
Title: Features Editor/Jet Setter
Qualifications: Features are his life, man
Favourite game: Penny rugby
Worst playground injury: Loads involving gravel and gravity
Best excuse for being late to work: 'Sorry, I was chasing a hot lead.'

THE ADDAMS FAMILY

MEGA drive!

Go, Gomez, go! The creepy clan who make The Munsters look like the Oxo family (shouldn't that be the other way around? – Man Ed) have gone walkabout, and only you can find them.

They may be creepy and kooky, mysterious and spooky, but they're certainly not flukey. An unknown force has imprisoned members of the Addams family in various parts of their vast mansion, and it's up to *you*, as Gomez, to get them back.

As platformers go, *The Addams Family* is pretty damn big. It features all kinds of scenarios to keep you playing — the sheer size isn't there for the sake of it but adds considerably to your enjoyment.

An innovative element, for a platform game, is the non-sequential way the stages interact. Although you often enter rooms (ie, levels) through doors leading off the main hallway, you can jump and occasionally fly between them using different routes, as they join up with each other and the grounds either side of the house.

One up on the opposition

Gameplay boils down to battering all kinds of nasties, mostly by jumping on their heads, until you reach your beloved family (though why you'd want to save this bunch of weirdos is beyond the ken of mortal man).

Jumping on trees and huge, overbearing mother birds is just the start of the barrel o' laffs. You face some very nasty beasties in the first few stages alone, but luckily there are epic quantities of hearts and 1-Ups just waiting to be collected.

Most are hidden behind secret doors, and one of the most original features is the way rooms with oodles of seriously useful bonuses (like The 1-Up Room, with zillions of 'em ripe for the plucking) are hidden behind secret doors within *other* hidden rooms!

It's no secret what MEGA MACHINES thinks of this cart — just read our comments.

/NICK 83%/



This game's one of the all-time cash-in greats — a pity it's been released so long after the film. Still, a good idea is still a good idea years later — or so antique dealers say when they get you to buy 1950s crap and say it's really tasteful now — and I looked

//////WARREN 79%/////



Blimey, Acclaim, you took your time, didn't you? I played the SNES version months ago. Sharply coded it may be, but there's nothing about The Addams Family that makes it difficult to reproduce on the Mega Drive. Better late than never...

Superficially, it's a *Mario* clone: scrolling platform levels full of strange creatures to stomp and blocks to butt. But compared to *any* platformer, *The Addams Family* is modern, colourful and full of character.

The sprites look cool and move smoothly, particularly Mr Addams himself. But one thing still puzzles me: when he crouches, Gomez puts an arm in front of his face and wiggles his head from side to side. WHAT THE HELL'S HE DOING?! Wiping sweat from his brow? Shivering with fear? Reading notes stuck to his sleeve? I think we should be told.

The soundtrack isn't up to the high standard of the graphics anymore — the SNES version's packed with parps, splats and miscellaneous wacky effects but here there's just a few half-hearted imitations.

The fancy parallax scrolling's been included — to full effect. It's most impressive in Pugsley's Den, all kinds of road signs shifting around to give an illusion of depth. There's not a hint of flicker or slowdown and tasteful colours don't distract you from the all-important action.

And what action it is! Although *The Addams Family* has dated (the superior sequel has already hit the SNES), it's still fast, often furious and above all, fun! Haunt you local retailer till he gives you a copy.



It's absolutely baking, and if that suit's as cheap as it looks, I bet he's got some nasty sweat patches under his 'pits. Most unsavoury!





Kids today, eh? You go to all the trouble of saving their miserable little lives, and what do you get? Not so much as a thank you!



HEAD

could be an Acclaimed hit.

I wasn't disappointed.

Though *The Addams Family* carries little of the eeriness I expected, and certainly nothing terrifying enough to make you spill your, er... fruit juice (honest, Mum, it just looks, smells and tastes like beer), gameplay's carried along by the fantastic way the stages link up. An underground passage can take you from a not-very-secret location to the graveyard with less hassle than usual, tying in an extra stage on the way.

The things I liked most were the hidden levels. Although it's not too difficult to find the minor collectables, it takes a lot of brains, joypad skills and luck to solve the problems and find places like The 1-Up Room.

The smooth scrolling and excellent touches, like Gomez' cute walk and zoot suit, are decorations on an already well-iced and solid cake that's been left on gas mark six for... (that's enough cookery metaphors — Sub Ed). Anyway, it's a great game. So there.







Kooky Kolectables



Poor quality drink, sold at Happy Shopper.



Either lives, or gents toilets.



A steel ball. At school, we used to call 'em 'a Bonker'.



Heart. Refills energy, but doesn't have a good beat!



The kind of sad trainers your Mam buys you.

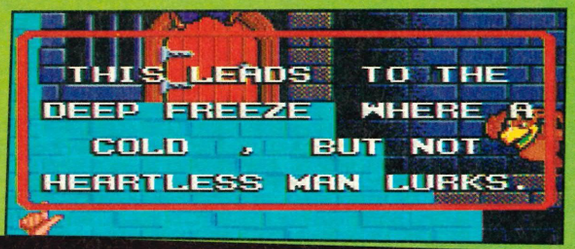


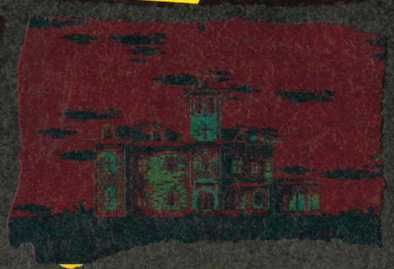
You can poke baddies with this, but it is sordid!



Cashing-in on the film? Or is it too late fot that?

Hints and tips are littered about the levels, but most of 'em are pointless. Just like this!





PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	LATE NOVEMBER
SIZE	8 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	5
CONTINUES	INFINITE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE

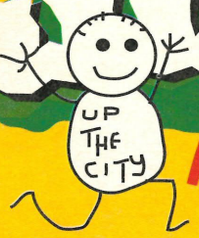




Gomez is an avid collector of road signs. And dead children.

GRAPHICS	80
SOUND	79
PLAYABILITY	82
LASTABILITY	90
ORIGINALITY	78
OVERALL	81

Sensible Soccer



Football crazy Mega Drive owners looked at the Amiga computer's many soccer sims with envious eyes... until they heard Sony were converting the league champion.

Football Sim Review



The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!



It's Gazza dribbling down the park. He's replaced his sad hair extentions and now has a star over his head.



As Claire Raynor would say, size isn't everything, it's personality that counts. And Sensi has that by the stadiumload.



As you can imagine with the launch of a magazine, time is tight and problems are many. Deadlines to meet. Software to collect and review. Pages and pages to write, edit, design and reproduce. And Al *still* can't work out the 'print' option on his word processor.

But one problem towered over all others, like Godzilla over Tokyo. The fact that, in this very office, there is a copy of *Sensible Soccer*.

There it is, plugged into the Mega Drive not five feet away. It sits there, silently and surely, beckoning one and all to stop what they're doing and play.

A plethora of other football games are about to be launched — *EA Soccer, Pele, J League Soccer*, to name but a few. All boast excellent

Name of the game

There are 168 teams to choose from. All the top international squads are there (and so are England), plus 64 of the best club sides in European competition this year.

Unfortunately, due to copyright reasons, some of the teams' and all

/////STEVE 96%/////



I hate football. No, seriously, I really HATE it. Oh, I had a minor fling with the sport in my youth, of course; endless hours were frittered away on the terraces of Cardiff Arms Park, waiting for John Toshack to work that aerial magic in his number ten shirt (showing your age there, son —Sub Ed). But the allure soon waned...

Now, though, after something like 40 games of MD *Sensible Soccer*, I'm coming back into the fold. Shouts of, 'Oh you twat! I could've got *that* in!' issue forth each time I see a game on TV and, sadder still, I've even found myself watching the odd Italian match, looking for different skills and tactics to adopt. Yeah, I know — depressing, isn't it?

The thing about *Sensible Soccer* that gets me every time is its sheer versatility. Practically *anything* is possible, from intricately worked-out-in-advance attacking moves to lucky long-ball goals from the halfway line. Offering more and more the better the player becomes, even true experts meet their match at the hands (feet?) of players who adopt a different playing style.

Fast, involved and absolutely thrilling (Brian), this has got to be *the* best two-player game ever created... on *any* format.

Altogether now: 'I'm forever blowing bubbles...' Er, or was that the theme from *Moonwalker*?







graphics, top quality sound and all the features we've come to expect. But despite that, they're gonna have to go some to match the playability of *Sensible Soccer*.

Play for toffee

The Amiga incarnation was hailed for its smooth action, responsive feel and scaled-down pitch, which allowed greater realism. *Sensi* is a veritable AC Milan of a sim, encouraging the passing game and dribbling wizardry.

All the quirks and foibles are here, including penalties and free kicks, the backpass rule, subs, tactics, aftertouch, plus red and yellow cards. The main exclusions are the offside rule, pools panel and puerile comments from Ron Atkinson and Jimmy Hill…

There are three difficulty levels, Beginner, Normal and Expert. Beginner eases the newcomer into the game, ball sticking to the feet like a slab of Thornton's Special Toffee to the back of your teeth.

The other options bring star players into the match. These boys are faster and more skilful so it's a good idea to give 'em some space and feed 'em the ball. And don't worry about goalies — they're automatic unless you backpass.

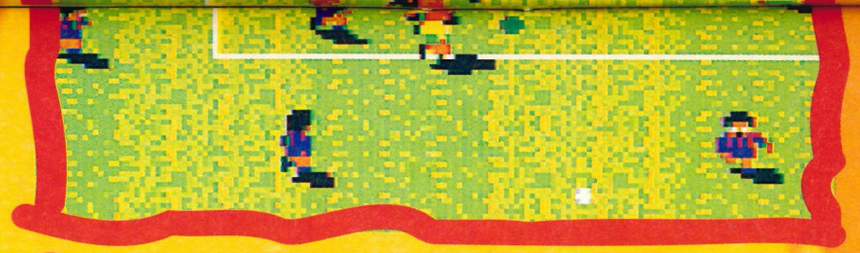
The main options screen offers everything a footy fan could dream of (apart from a 'Kill Alan Sugar' setting). You can toggle the game length (3–20 minutes), choose weather, pitch conditions and difficulty.

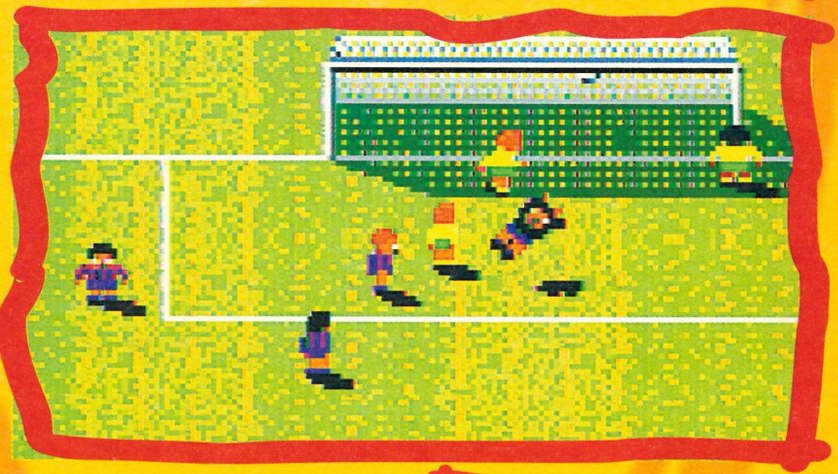
the players' names have been changed. Fortunately they can be restored to their rightful glory, thanks to the battery back-up.

You can alter the squads and rightfully put Chris Waddle back into the England squad. You don't like Man United's new away strip? Change it back to the old one. You don't like Man United? Change their name to 'Overrated Ponces' or something. The possibilities are endless.

Sensible Soccer uses the MD's three buttons to full effect. The [B] button is the standard Amiga pass-or-shoot affair, depending on how long you hold it down. Button [C] is used for gentle strokes around the park, Forest style, and [A] allows big thwacks from the back or net-busting Stuart Pearce psychoblasters. If you get the ball to a star player, it's automatically aimed at goal.

What gives *Sensi* its undisputable lastability is the vast range of tournaments. Check this out: all eight







European World Cup qualifying groups, a Euro League Of Nations, 'Maastricht Cup' knockout and the '92 European Championships. And that's just in the National section!

The Club section offers all three main competitions and a Super League. If that wasn't enough, you can customise leagues and cups with whatever teams you like. Basically, if you can be bothered to alter the names as the years roll on, this cart will never go out of date.



There's more formations in Sensi than an entire series of Come Dancing. You can't bring on Rosemarie Ford or Donnie Burns as subs though.







The Vinny Jones and Terry Hurlocks of this world get their just desserts. Off! Off! Off!



Flipping 'eck ref, that was a foul surely



Ooohhhh! Not the kind of thing we'd like the youngsters at home to pick up...



And the ref's given a penalty! Terry Sprite steps up to the spot...



He's put it to the keeper's right...



Gooooooo

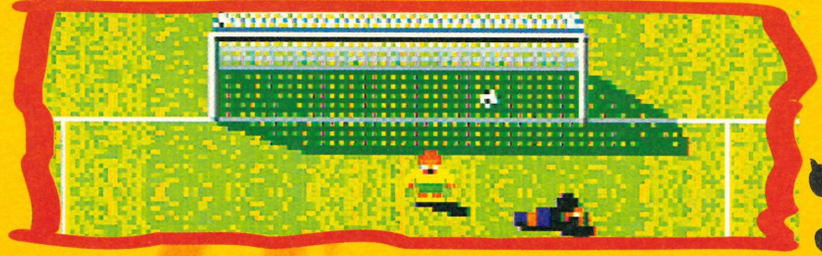
///////AL 98%/////////

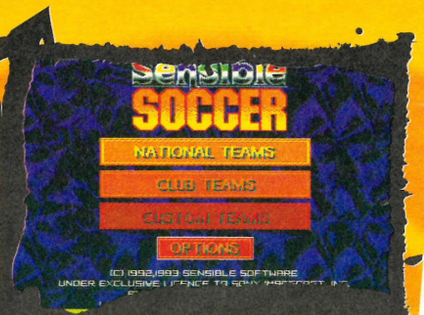


Listen, I'll be brief — the quicker I write this, the sooner I can get back on the Mega Drive. In my opinion, Sensible Soccer is the best game, on any machine, ever. If I could only take one game to a desert island, it'd be this one.

When I heard it was coming out for the MD, I was worried they'd bodge the conversion by dressing it up with bigger sprites and better sounds, to the detriment of gameplay. Thankfully they didn't, and Mega Drive owners from here to the Planet 'Ch' shall rejoice at that.

Look at the screenshots on this page. Now forget about them. There are no gimmicks or innovations in modern publishing technology to get across the smoothness, playability and quality of *Sensi Soccer.* Just believe me when I tell you that if you have the slightest inclination towards footy and get only one Mega Drive game this Christmas — sod it, *ever*— buy this. Trust me. Sensible *Sex.*





PUBLISHER	SONY
PRICE	TBA
RELEASE DATE	DECEMBER
SIZE	4 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-64
SKILL LEVELS	3
LIVES	WON'T HAVE ONE ANYMORE
CONTINUES	REPLAYS IN FRIENDLYS
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	YES
SPECIALS	LOADS

Yes, you can even design your favourite team's nasty away strip. Bet you won't come up with anything as tacky as Southampton's though...





Talk us through it, Kev

Well, Brian, they've lined up for a free, but Trev sees me...



...lurking on the edge of the box, so he slides it out...



...right onto me left peg. The keeper had no chance...



...now, if you'll excuse me, I'm off to open a boutique...



This strapping young lad's looking forward to his half time orange. He injected half a pint of vodka into it.



GRAPHICS	81
SOUND	79
PLAYABILITY	98
LASTABILITY	99
ORIGINALITY	65
OVERALL	97

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Impact/Dec93

Review
Shoot'em-up!

ROBOCOP Vs. THE TERMINATOR

MEGA drive!

At long last the silver screen's metal heavies fight it out to settle the old argument: who's the hardest, Officer Murphy or the T800 Terminator? Sorry, Arnie fans, but our money's on the cyborg cop…

What happens when you pit two of the world's heftiest metallic monsters in a battle of wits, brawn and non-stop ass-kickin'? You get a stonking platform blast from Virgin, that's what. The game's based on the *Robocop Vs The Terminator* four-part comic series, published by Dark Horse last year, and puts gamers in control of Officer Murphy (aka RoboCop) as he encounters hordes of metal Arnie skeletons.

Picture the scene: present-day Detroit. Years after RoboCop's invention, Cyberdyne Systems are contacted by Sac-Norad to build the Skynet defence network. Computer scientists see RoboCop's revolutionary engineering as the only successful linking of human mind and computer, and tailor his

in the OCP offices and lure RoboCop into a battle with the mighty ED-209. Once Robo defeats ED, he uploads himself into Skynet's computer and unknowingly gives the organisation the technology it needs.

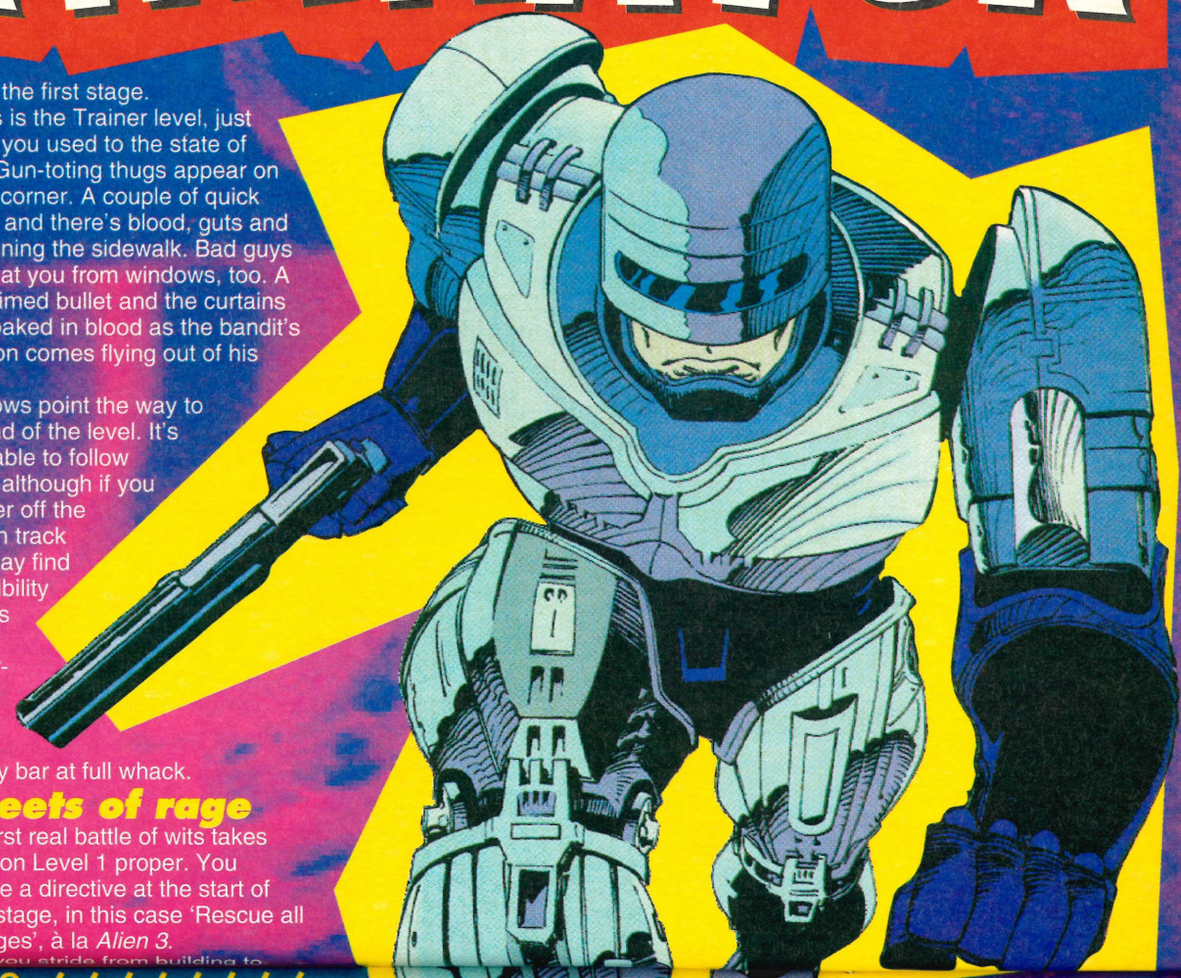
RoboCop's brought back online in a Terminator outpost, where it hits him he's going to have to battle through a Termie-infested world to reach the inner sanctum of Skynet HQ. If RoboCop's to save humanity, he must destroy its CPU. Bit of a tall order, eh?

Thing is, we know you're up to it. Yep, that's right! You play the part of RoboCop, kitted-out in that smart metallic suit of yours, armed with a rapid-fire machine gun and seven lives. Choose the difficulty level — Wimpy, Normal or Killer — and let

rip on the first stage.

This is the Trainer level, just to get you used to the state of play. Gun-toting thugs appear on every corner. A couple of quick blasts and there's blood, guts and gore lining the sidewalk. Bad guys shoot at you from windows, too. A well-aimed bullet and the curtains are soaked in blood as the bandit's weapon comes flying out of his hand.

Arrows point the way to the end of the level. It's advisable to follow them, although if you wander off the beaten track you may find invincibility shields and power-ups to keep your energy bar at full whack.



Streets of rage

The first real battle of wits takes place on Level 1 proper. You receive a directive at the start of each stage, in this case 'Rescue all hostages', à la *Alien 3*.

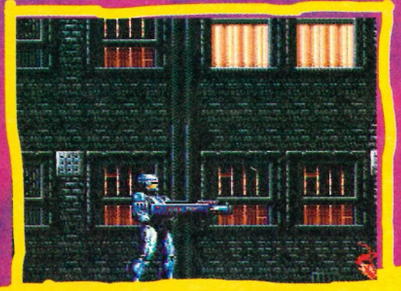
As you stride from building to

technology to build Skynet's CPU.

Successful it may have been, but the boffin's subsequent experiments go drastically wrong. Soon after Skynet is brought online, it becomes self-aware and decides, in its own sweet way, that the human race is the enemy. It launches a genocidal war of machine against man.

Robo a-go-go!

Attempting to thwart the human resistance, Skynet sends a squadron of Terminators into the past. These mean machines arrive



ADE 86%



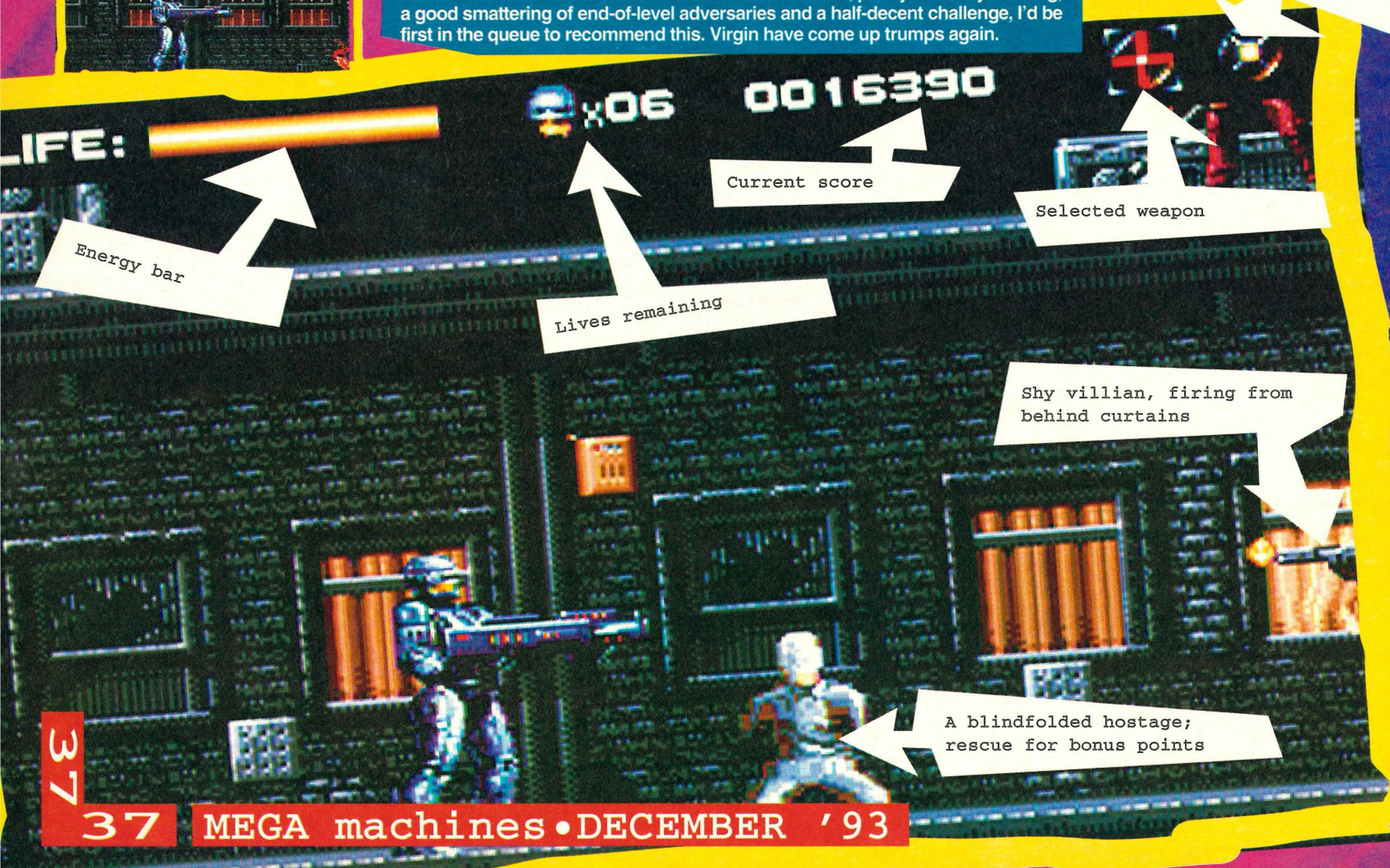
There's nothing in *RoboCop vs The Terminator* we haven't seen before but what the hell, it's a cracking blaster-cum-platformer, with plenty of blood and guts, so I'm happy! The action's fast and furious, especially in later levels when the gunmen fire willy-nilly, Terminators refuse to lie down and the droids are attracted to RoboCop's suit like a magnet.

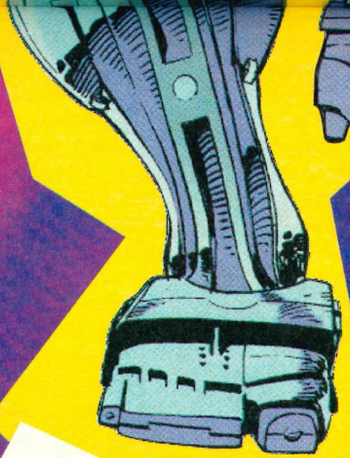
The graphics are smart — incredibly atmospheric. In the streets of Detroit, newspapers blow in the wind and watching bad guys cop it from office block windows is great.

You won't believe the number of extra weapons you can collect. It's up to you to decide which gun is best suited to which bad guy. The heat-seeker and the laser are superb. The bigger and better the weapons you find, the bigger your bonus at the end of the round.

I hate to follow suit, but I bet every review you read about *RoboCop vs The Terminator* will mention *Alien 3* somewhere. You can't help but mention it 'cos the similarities are there. Visuals are similar in some areas and the hostage-rescuing goes without saying, but there's more to it than freeing dimwits in distress.

Virgin have combined the best elements of a platform game and shoot-'em-up and come up with a corker of a cart. I enjoyed *RoboCop vs The Terminator* more than *Alien 3*. With excellent music and sound FX, plenty of baddy-blasting, a good smattering of end-of-level adversaries and a half-decent challenge, I'd be first in the queue to recommend this. Virgin have come up trumps again.





Available weapon

building, leap from platform to platform, climb ladders like there's no tomorrow and grapple hand over hand on telegraph wires, keep your eyes peeled for extra weapons. You can carry two at once and switch between them using [A]. You'll soon find which weapons are best. The heat-seeking gun is a stonker, but it's lost if you ▶▶



die while using it, so keep your best ammo in reserve when energy's running low.

Secret stages are hidden on most levels. In Detroit, you're asked to collect extra lives in the secret OCP offices. Find them if you dare!

At the end of the stage, you confront one of the end-of-level Terminators. The one in Detroit's not *that* difficult to oust, but don't let him lull you into a false sense of security. This *is* only Level 1, after all!

After receiving health and mission bonuses and points for weapons collected, it's time to visit Delta City and take out the security cameras.

Down on the farm

In the Toxic Farm, barrels of nuclear waste litter the countryside. Couple that with air and ground attacks from metallic droids and the going's certainly tougher.

Your next directive is to rescue OCP employees from their office complex, then trash the building. Yet again, climbing ladders and finding big and beefy weapons is par for the course.

As you'd expect, the Terminator Outpost is swarming with the beggars. Each takes two or three hits before exploding to kingdom come. The huge incarnation at the end of this stage doesn't half take some blasting!

When you reach the Underground Complex, you begin to wonder whether it's all worth it. The directive is to just stay alive. Sounds easy? Get a grip!

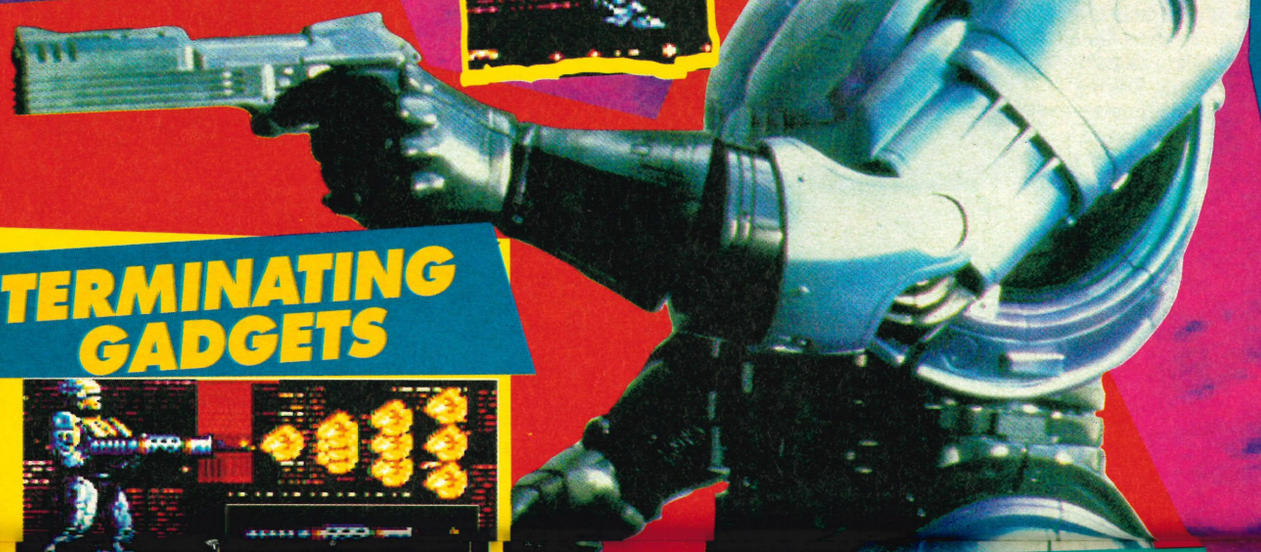
Terminators, droids, henchmen looming from all four corners. Does that sound easy? Plenty are lives are lost here, but fret not, you've a store of continues which may help you through the thick of things. Believe us, you're gonna need 'em!







Shades of the original RoboCop movies as he fights in a derelict industrial zone.



TERMINATING GADGETS

OCP & SKYNET'S FINEST



1 Big momma with a big gun, but a very small threat to Robo.



2 The fleshy Terminator comes back to life time and again.



3 Remember RoboCop 2 from, er… RoboCop 2? He's back



4 Skynet tank dies in three stages, the gun, turret then tracks.



5 Everyone's fave RoboCop character, ED-209. Tough but fair.



6 The tall Termie guards a bunker among the ruble in 2029.



7 This strange chain gun fires bursts in all directions.



8 Lurking in lava, this robot's slow but has powerful weaponary.



9 Very similar to the seventh boss but takes many, many hits.

The big finish. Strange, we never expected skynet to look like this. Terminators attack from both sides, missiles launch from its mouth, things fly through the air… in other words, a very tough customer!



10

Flame thrower: sends out a cloud of fire which eliminates enemies' attack



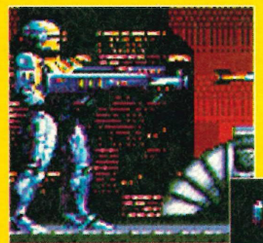
Grenade launcher: keep held down and you can aim the ammo!





Missile launcher: it looks like a shotgun but has a trick or two up its barrel!





Heat-seeking missiles: keep one of these in reserve and you've got it made.



Red laser: looks fearsome but not particularly effective.







White laser: Obliterates all but the toughest mechanoids in a single blast.





ED-200 cannon: when you defeat the fifth boss, it drops this hefty lump of hardware.

////WARREN 83%////



Being a big comics fan (or 'complete prat who spends massive wads of cash to find out what the Hulk's up to this month'), I read the Dark Horse mini-series and thoroughly enjoyed it. I wondered how the ins and outs of the comic would translate into a game so I expectantly plugged in the cart and... Oh. A platform-based shoot-'em-up.

There's more to the *RoboCop vs The Terminator* story than guns and fighting but I wasn't surprised that the violence would come to the fore. Happily, the resultant gameplay's exciting and fun.

The RoboCop sprite's one of the biggest and best I've seen in a game of this type. Almost a third of the screen in height, he's beautifully shaded and stomps purposefully around, light reflecting on his shiny chest when he fires. I've one query, though: how can he shin up and down ladders at least twice as fast as he walks?

Some of the sound effects are superb. Sharp metallic clanks and pings, a variety of weapon sounds and a smattering of samples mingle perfectly with aggressive, mysterious music.

There's a massive challenge on offer — even Wimpy difficulty setting gives you a run for your money — so its always worth checking every nook and cranny for extra energy, lives or one of the better weapons. There's a wide range of firepower on offer, much of it the most impressive weaponry I've seen on the MD.

Dull, Mary Whitehouse-type people will object to *RoboCop vs The Terminator*, because of the endless violence and extremely gory deaths — bad guys disappear in explosions of blood, putting *Mortal Kombat* to shame. But Sega gamers who want a no-nonsense blaster to take them into the cold winter nights, look no further.







There's fire down below... and a crazed robot up ahead! Luckily RoboCop can fire his gun while climbing across pipes and railings.



ROBOCOP VERSUS THE TERMINATOR

PUBLISHER:	VIRGIN
PRICE:	£44.99
RELEASE DATE:	NOVEMBER
SIZE:	16 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	3
LIVES	7
CONTINUES	3
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE

GRAPHICS	86
SOUND	85
PLAYABILITY	88
LASTABILITY	82
ORIGINALITY	27
OVERALL	84

COSMIC SPACEHEAD



How many 'cult' characters do we need? Sonic, James Pond, Alex Kidd, Wonderboy, Tails... Codemasters' new creation's given a leg-up from two opposing game styles but is their grip firm?

OBJECTS



//AL 84%//



Adventure and arcade rub shoulders in Codemasters' latest. Cosmic Spacehead's such a beautiful marriage of the two genres, I wish them both the best of luck as they begin their journey through life, hand in hand, in sickness and in health.

Excuse me for a moment, I'm getting a bit emotional [blows nose]... That's better!

The complexity level's pitched just right for inexperienced adventurers — not overly tough but not patronisingly easy, either. With so many locations and all, it takes an age to reach a complete dead end. And when you do, or even finish the game, it's shelf life isn't over. Codemasters have included an independent two-player game, where you control a wind-up pie-throwing dinosaur in a maze littered with power-ups.

To be honest, it's a poor man's *Super Mario Kart* Battle Mode and brings back memories of the old Atari *Combat* game (ask your dad). Though not worthy of release in its own right, it's a welcome diversion from puzzle-solving.

The God of Cuteness reigns supreme over *Cosmic Spacehead*. The graphics smack of Fifties futurist kitsch and the basic, uncluttered play areas have a brilliantly quirky feel.

Anyone who fancies dipping their big toe into the murky waters of adventure gaming would be well advised to check this out.



A racy, pacy bonus level, this one involves a mini bumper-car track... with holes in it. Take caaaaare!



//NICK 88%//



From the moment I realised it was a cutesy, cartoon-style adventure, I dreaded having to write something complimentary about Cosmic Spacehead.

Take the plot: some moron alien from the planet Linoleum (I ask you!) visits Earth and returns home. Fine. But instead of curling up in front of his carpet-fuelled fire and boring the grandchildren to tears with his, 'Arr, when I were a lad' stories, he has to return to Earth and collect absolute proof he's been there.

With this in mind, I played *Cosmic Spacehead* and found — much to my amazement — it's an incredibly impressive game. Sure, it uses clichéd adventure ideas, like semi-hidden exits into important areas, so it takes a lot of time and just as much frustration to find them... but the overall gameplay more than makes up for that.

The puzzle aspects are cunningly interspersed in an arcade-style platformer and, even better, you don't have to go through them time and again, as completed areas are replaced by a dinky-linky sequence.

An original addition is *Pie Slap, Cosmic*'s two-player game. According to Codemasters, Mr Spacehead's favourite sport is playing with his Splatdrone (whose isn't?), and now two (yes, two!) players can join in the fun of splatting each other with pies.

As far as I'm concerned, this is the icing on the cake (boom boom! Classic confectionery joke no.23) of a corking game — damn it, it's a groovy experience in arcade adventuring!

NASTIES


Flying fish are dangerous, incredibly dim, but make great pets.


A purple grape with a bent pin stuck up it. And a leg.


Fishius Flyfingerus - also known as Dave the flying fish.


A mosquito. But a red and blue one with wibbly eyes.


A jellyfish. Green glow and googly eyes warn off predators.


A fish. See how it uses its fish like abilities to attack you


Nipple on legs, or maybe a genetically advanced strawberry?

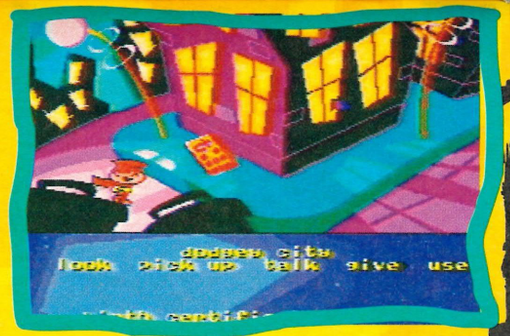

This is a, umm, kind of, umm, maybe it's a, nope. Oh, I give up.


This could be a clue to a future free gift, or maybe not! Hmmm.

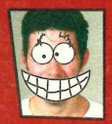
Bloody tourists! They come over here in their Union Jack shorts, throw up in shop doorways, complain about the food, moan about the beer and take photos of each other's arses.

Ooo, hang on, though — that's *us*, innit? Still… bloody tourists, eh? Take pity on Linus Spacehead, though. The poor youth's just discovered a weird alien planet called Earth, but instead of bringing back a toy donkey, commemorative tea towel or 'My Mate Discovered The Planet Earth And All I Got Was This Crappy T-Shirt' apparel, nothing was purloined nor photos taken. Consequently, alien chins (all five of them) are stroked in disbelief when he returns to his home on planet Linoleum.

So, in the words of that prat with the fisherman's hat in Curiosity Killed The Cat, Linus decided to go 'straight back down, y'all, straight back down' to Earth and get some proof. Unfortunately, with no transport and only one Linodollar in his pocket, things look bleak for the space-headed one...



//JAMES 80%//



Ahhhhh! Where did I put those shades? I haven't seen so many Dayglo colours since, er, our tasty-looking front cover. Never mind, one quick twiddle of the TV controls and we're sorted.

***Cosmic Spacehead* has an acceptable scenario, and you, as Cosmic, start in true adventure style: skint as a very poor thing with no money and carrying an electronic inventory containing only the bare essentials.**

The first problem was the language barrier. This was *before* I realised you can play in one of four languages and had accidentally selected German. Doh! Moving swiftly on...

The adventure has an excellent difficulty gradient. There's nothing worse than getting a new game and not being able to take more than two steps for the first fortnight. *Cosmic Spacehead*'s an easy-starter. In a way, it trains you up for what's in store later on.

The arcade sections break things up, which worked well for me (he said in his best art dealer voice), mainly 'cos I get bored easily. If it was nothing but wandering, looking and picking up, I'd soon be out the door on a little adventure of my own called, 'Sod this, I'm off down the pub!'.

As for the two-player game, I'm still a little undecided. To give you some idea of what it's like, imagine a scaled-down version of the tank race in *Micro Machines*. The scoring works in exactly the same manner, but there's no racing involved and your firepower's enhanced.

You're gonna get your money's worth with *Cosmic Spacehead* — it's not just for adventure freaks.

Pointing chic

The heart of *Cosmic Spacehead* is an impressive arcade adventure, similar to Lucasfilm's *Indiana Jones* series. Basically, it's a point-and-click affair, with all those old favourites we've come to know and love over the years: the enchanting 'Use'; the haunting 'Talk To'; and who could forget the timeless 'Look At'?

Seriously, those who flinch at the word 'adventure' needn't fret — *Cosmic Spacehead*'s so user-friendly, it'd let you borrow its favourite records and not worry too much if you scratched 'em.

The game's spread over three main stops on the way to Earth: Linoleum, Detroitica (an enormous car factory on an asteroid) and a space station. There are locations a-plenty and a host of people and creatures to interact with.

The beauty of *Cosmic*, though, is that it weaves arcade sections into the adventure without detracting from either element. For example, to get from one location to another, you guide Linus through a level of platform-related japery.

Another example: to reach Detroitica, Linus needs a bus ticket, which he wins in an overhead-view car race. There are a massive 32 arcade-oriented sub-games in total, all accessed by solving the various problems.

When the strain of solving Linus's problems takes its toll, grab a mate (carefully!) and chill out with a game of *Pie Slap*. Steer a dragon-like sprite around a single-screen maze and splat your rival with as many pies as possible while he does the same.

Get up from the lino and smell the custard — it's *Cosmic*!



PUBLISHER:	CODEMASTERS
PRICE:	£39.99
RELEASE DATE:	OUT NOW
SIZE:	8 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS:	1
SKILL LEVELS:	1
LIVES:	3
CONTINUES:	NONE
PASSWORD SYSTEM:	YES
BATTERY BACKUP:	NO
SPECIALS:	TWO-PLAYER 'PIE SLAP' GAME

GRAPHICS	79
SOUND	75
PLAYABILITY	69
LASTABILITY	76
ORIGINALITY	74
OVERALL	84

ZOOL



MEGA drive!

Platform Review

Zool – he's too cool to fool! Er, sorry, that was Chester Cheetah, wasn't it? Anyhow, the ninja alien hops over to the Mega Drive, blades flashing.



Talk about taking coals to Newcastle! Almost a year ago, Gremlin released *Zool* for the Amiga, touting it as a *Sonic*-beater with console-like speed and depth (of course, it took five minutes to load up and you'd knacker your wrist wrestling with the one-button joystick, but so what?). Units were shifted, the game was rated as one of the Amiga's best, and everyone wondered what creature Zool was. End of story.

Except that it isn't. Zool's bought himself a ticket to Sega City and now finds himself on the Mega Drive.

You know the form: Zool, cruising along the cosmos in his spaceship, crashes, burns and arrives on a weird planet. And we all know what that means, don't we? That's right — platforms!

Eight different worlds await the ant-like ninja-monger, all containing four levels and an end-of-level boss (not to mention various hidden sub-games) and all tainted with weirdness.

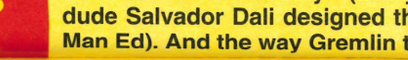
Calorie counting

Take Sweet World, for example. It's a chocoholic's heaven, crammed with biscuits, trifle, candy sticks and jumping on them, firing at them, performing a spinning sword-slice or just giving 'em a good kicking.

Gunslinging bananas!

The baddies are blessed with a great deal of intelligence (when you switch the cart off, they all go to the library, play chess and debate the moral implications of the gore code in *Mortal Kombat*) and don't faff







PUBLISHER	GREMLIN
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
SIZE	XX MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	3
LIVES	3-5
CONTINUES	5
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE



//NICK 84%//////////



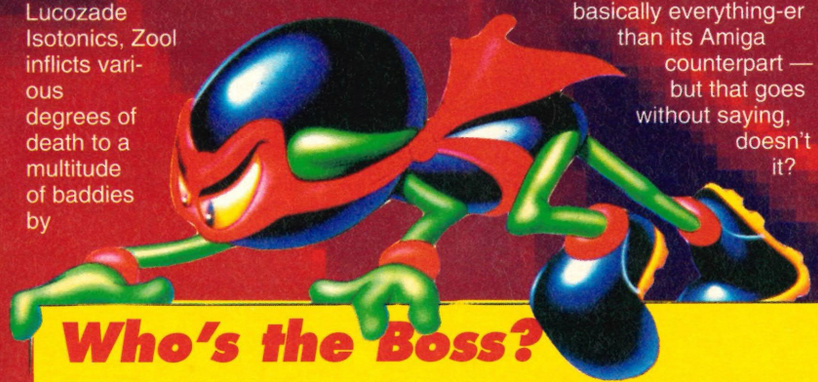
Zool — the Amiga's answer to Sonic and Mario? That's up to those saddo computer types to decide, but Zool replacing Sonic on the Mega Drive? I think not. Still, it could link arms and join in the fun...

My first impression was that *Zool*'s another of those tedious marketing tie-in games that make me want to turn off and, in the immortal lines of *Why Don't You?*, do something less boring instead.

I couldn't believe it: I was hardly into Sweet World and there were bloody great Chuppa Chups all over the shop. 'Hmm,' I thought, 'full marks for subtlety.' (Did you know that famous weirdo-arty dude Salvador Dali designed the Chuppa Chups logo, though? — Man Ed). And the way Gremlin tried to create *another* cute charac-

other assorted gunk Zool has to collect to progress to the next level. No lie, when we first fired this baby up, the entire MEGA MACHINES staff suffered an attack of rampant acne — we had to nip to Boot's for an industrial-sized tub of Clearasil damn quick.

The E-numbers in the cheaper sweets have another effect on Zool: the guy (ant/alien/ninja/whatever) is *hyperactive*! Zipping around like Billy Whizz after a few Lucozade Isotonics, Zool inflicts various degrees of death to a multitude of baddies by

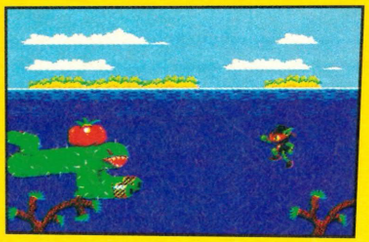


about, going for you as soon as you enter their domain. You don't get chance to think as you hack and slash along the platforms.

Each world is inhabited by appropriate weirdos, such as flying disks and bongos with legs in Music World and enormous rolling potatoes and gunslinging bananas in Fruit & Veg World; while gargantuan chainsaws and blow-torches litter Tool World.

All in all, Mega Drive *Zool* is bigger, faster, tougher, and basically everything-er than its Amiga counterpart — but that goes without saying, doesn't it?

Who's the Boss?



Cactus World



Fair World



Fruit World



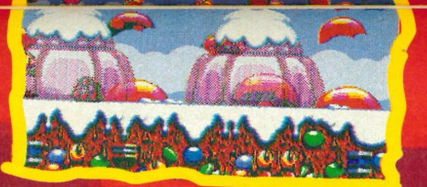
Tool World

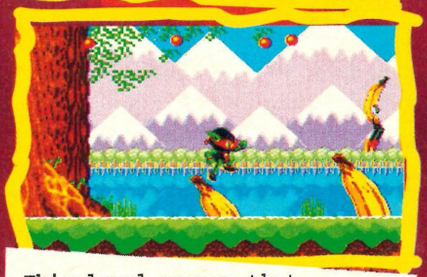


Music World



Toy World

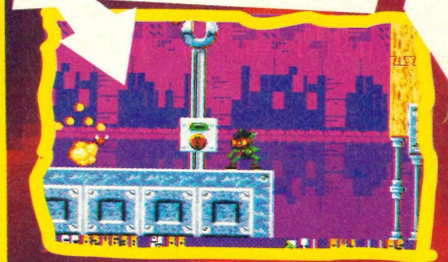




This level proves that Ninjas are so tough they can even fight off cavities. For example, when was the last time you saw a Bruce Lee look-a-like at the dentist?



Here we have a clever restart point/stress release combination. Simply punch the button and a host of problems are solved in an instant!



ter with attitude didn't help matters.

After I discovered how useful those spin-jumps can be when it comes to blasting through barrel-loads of baddies, however, I really got into it. *Zool* became more than just an average platformer, and the enormous range of themed backgrounds, baddies and collectables add to the fun.

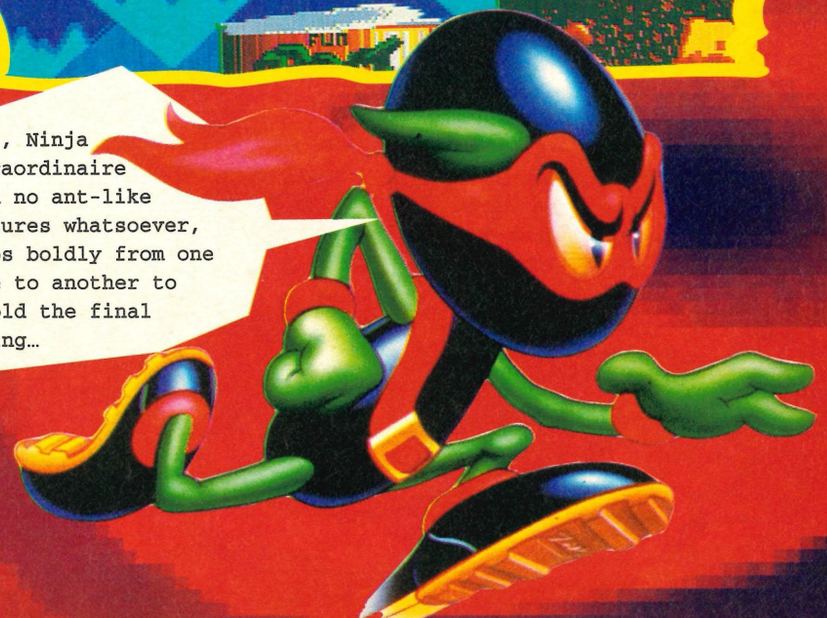
The way everything interacts is extremely well done and shows how cleverly put-together *Zool* is. You'll have to play it yourself to see exactly what I mean, but take my word for it that the playability is pretty damn funky.

***Zool* will never replace Sonic's games — though I wouldn't be distraught if it replaces *Mario World* when the SNES version hits town — but it's well worth checking out if you like unusual platformers.**





Zool, Ninja extraordinaire with no ant-like features whatsoever, leaps boldly from one page to another to behold the final rating…

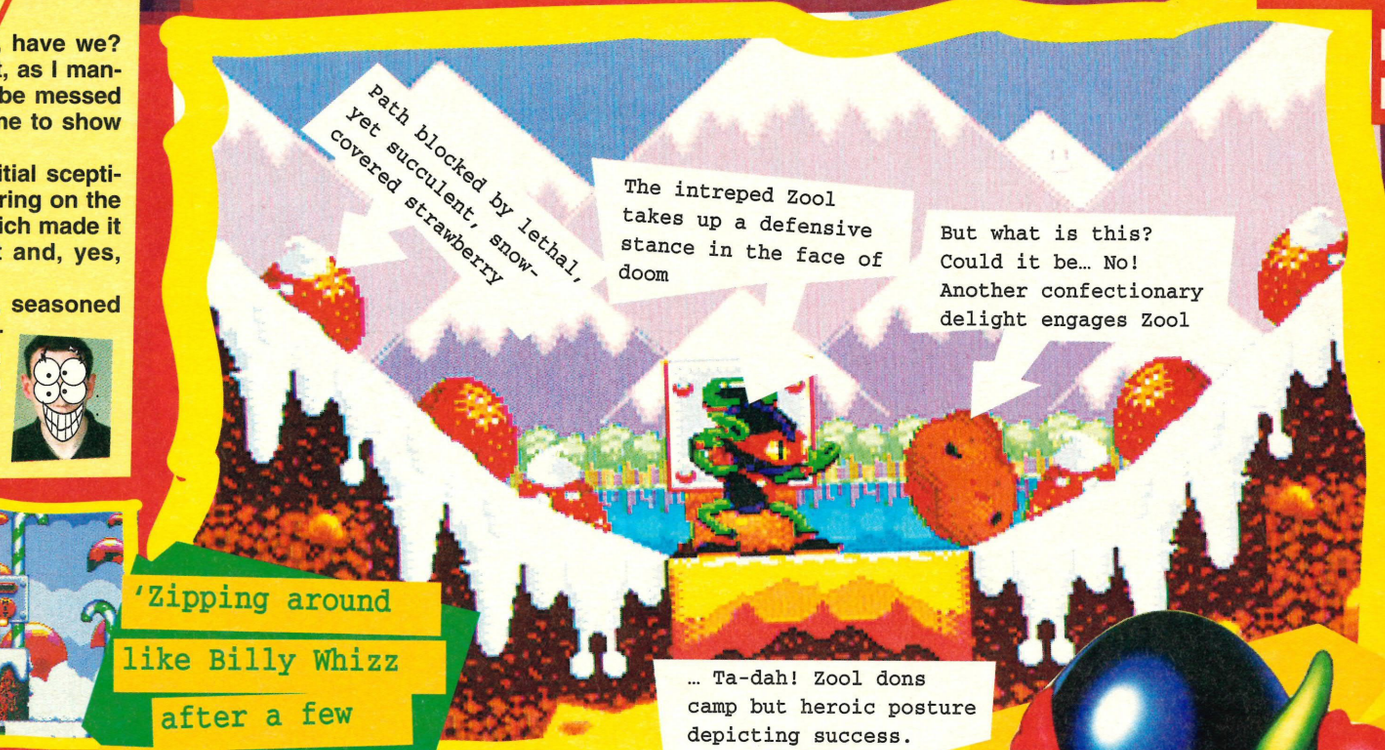


/////AL 81%/////

'So, Zool, me old mate, come to play with the big boys, have we? Reckon you're hard enough, do you? Eh? EH?!' I thought, as I manfully rammed the cart into the slot. I was in no mood to be messed around. Sure, Zool was a hit on the Amiga, but it was time to show and prove.

And there's no doubt Gremlin have pulled it off. My initial scepticism — 'What's the point of a console game rip-off appearing on the Mega Drive?' — vanished as I played. All the elements which made it such a success on the Amiga are present and correct and, yes, improved upon.

Although it brings nothing new to the platform genre, seasoned platform fiends will love *Zool*, firstly because it's phenomenally fast (*too* fast at times), and secondly because it's a mutha to get through. Even the best players will find it a challenge-and-a-half, which is high praise indeed for a platformer. Good show, Gremlin — I take my trousers off to you.







'Zipping around like Billy Whizz after a few Lucozade Isotonics'

In need of a helpful pick-me-up?


Get a life if you're feeling dead on your feet.


Whadda points mean? Yup, prizes. And, um, that's it.


A restart point for restarting after you've started.


Ah, more bonuses. This one's found in Sweet World.


Gives you double vision. Extra Zool helps you out.

The double Zool power-up helps you out no end. The second Zool copies everything you do, almost.



GRAPHICS	83
SOUND	77
PLAYABILITY	81
LASTABILITY	76
ORIGINALITY	58
OVERALL	83



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MEGA drive!

Platform Review

X-Men's revenge

Building on over 30 years of incredibly successful comics, Marvel's characters are making ever-more regular appearances on consoles. Five of their best-known superheroes team up in this Arcade game...

It's hardly worth bothering with the plotline for this game, is it? We all know Spidey (as his mates call him) and we've at least heard of the X-Men, even if we're not regular viewers of the Sky One cartoon series.

It's the usual story: Four of the X-Men — Cyclops, Wolverine, Storm and Gambit — have been captured by one of their most feared villains, Arcade, and Spider-Man's aiding their escape by deactivating alarms.

Spidey jumps and 'webs' his way aimlessly around a couple of buildings until his 'spider-sense' tells him where the next flashing alarm is. He then has to touch it then wander around until... etc etc. With hardly any nasties and no time limit, this opening level isn't difficult.

Don't be alarmed

When Spidey's mangled all the oh-so-dangerous alarms and broken into Arcade's *extremely* well-protected lair, the villain captures him and arranges all kinds of 'fun' for the superheroes. Arcade by name and arcade-loving by nature, this cheeky chappy wants to destroy them in his house of horrors.

Each superhero has their own tailor-made torture chamber, and these stages are just as hard as the first one was easy.

Gambit, the card-throwing wonder, has to battle through a hail of fire, pursued by an enormous spiked ball; Wolverine, faced with a whole host of evil-doers, has only his Adamantium claws to protect him; Storm's weather pow-



PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	NOVEMBER
SIZE	8 MEG

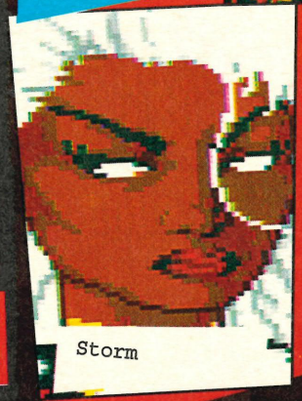
OPTIONS

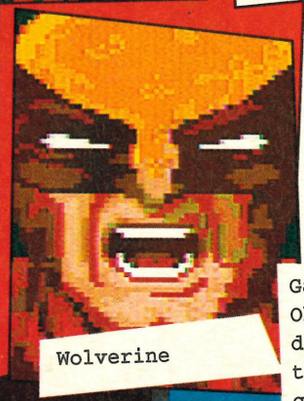
PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	4
CONTINUES	NONE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE

The Gang in full!

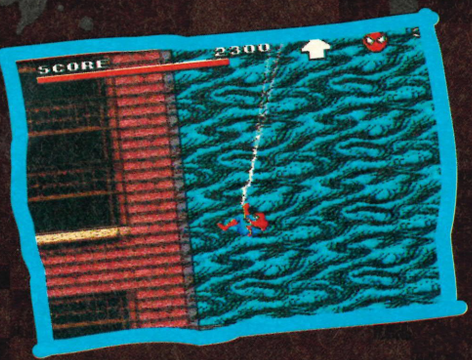

Spider-Man

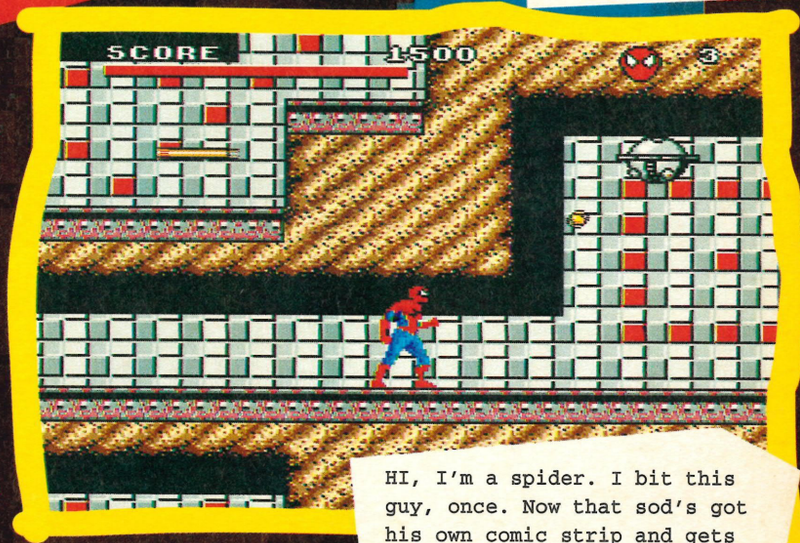

Cyclops


Storm


Wolverine


Gambit
Okay, so this is a drawing, but we smashed the cart up before getting all the pics.







HI, I'm a spider. I bit this guy, once. Now that sod's got his own comic strip and gets to wear a Lycra cat suit.



Spider-Man Arcade

ers are perfectly suited to watery levels; and Cyclops struggles to use a pair of 3D glasses... or something.

Read our comments, if you haven't done so already, to get a full idea of the game and its myriad ins and outs (ahem!).







This strip seems to have lost the suspense and thrill captured so well in the comic. Come to think of it, so has the game!

//AL 37%//



I bet you all think I've got such a cushy job, don't you? I can hear you now: 'Oh, he's having a right doss, doing nowt but playing games all day'. Wrong, pal. Dead wrong.

Because every now and then, you have to play some of the biggest pieces of unmitigated toss that have ever been spawned by Satan's chest. You know what I'm talking about — gameplay as gripping as... oh, God, I can't even be bothered to waste my metaphorical skills on such a duff game.

After a dull section of platform-related nothingness, we're 'treated' to another Master System-like jump-from-level-to-level-and-get-shot-at hellfest, tainted with the stench of crapness.

Play this game and you'll finally realise why Spider-Man goes around in disguise. *I'd* wear a mask if I starred in such a bad game.

/////NICK 45%/////



This game is crap. Don't buy it. Instead, you should be down the pub with a pint of stout (preferably Guinness or Beamish) in one hand and Catherine Zeta-Jones (or equivalent fit bird) on the other. Oh, and a fat enough wallet to buy me a few rounds. It's a much better, longer-lasting purchase than this cart.

Basically, *Spider-Man & The X-Men* is too crap to talk about, and anyway, I'm sure you're bored of endless comments like, 'This game isn't very good. The graphics leave much to be desired etc'. So I'm going to talk about Ludlow instead.

Ludlow is a small town in south Shropshire. It's the home of Impact, those wonderful publishers of this fantastic magazine, who for some reason known only to themselves, thought it would be a good place to set up a world-beating company.

This place is dire: it has no 7–11, no McDonald's and no Phonecard machines. You don't know the troubles I've had with the MEB, trying to get some electricity out of the meter in my flat, and the only places open after 7.30 are the three chippies and 26 pubs (I kid you not).

Call me a soft Southerner (you're a soft Southerner —Everyone), but in the tiny suburb of north London I was dragged from to work here, I can get to all these life-saving facilities in about five minutes.

I've got to go 'cos I've filled all the space I'm allowed, but just remember: don't buy *Spider-Man & The X-Men* — like you wouldn't fill your underpants with vipers. Or leave civilisation to live in Ludlow (...but we *do* have a handy P45 dispenser! —Man Ed).

GRAPHICS	41
SOUND	59
PLAYABILITY	46
LASTABILITY	27
ORIGINALITY	29
OVERALL	41

Disney's Aladdin

'Open sesame!' – cried the spotty child when he realised he'd forgotten the relish. Just in time for panto season, Sega release Virgin's cartoon spectacular.

Let's get this straight before we begin: *Aladdin* is *not* just another platformer cashing in on a hit film. Though a certain rival mag recently ran a feature on how all movie-based games are crap — and they nearly all are — this one's a major, *major* exception. *Aladdin*'s not been programmed so much as hand-crafted by Virgin and Sega, with more than a smidgen of help from the Disney team who created the feature-length cartoon.

The idea's to reach the evil Sultan Jafar's palace, where beautiful Princess Jasmine is trapped. Your baggy trews billow out as you platform your way around hefty levels in search of parts of a golden scarab beetle. Armed only with your trusty scimitar and a few apples, decimate desert-dwelling foes you encounter.

But it's not all hack 'n' slay: on many levels the object is to survive hazards such as rolling boulders. Then there's the magic carpet, which gradually speeds up as you follow the Genie's directions.



Aladdin discovers that jumping on spikes can ruin a perfectly good pair of pantaloons.

'Wanna buy a continue?'

Apples and gems can be used to buy lives and 'wishes' (continues) from a dodgy merchant who wanders the desert and sets up his stall in front of you, as well as flashing open his 'dirty old man' raincoat in a disturbing manner.

It's not just the gameplay that makes *Aladdin* so clever, it's the brilliant little touches: When you throw an apple at a dagger-wielding foe, anything less than perfect hither and thither.

The music which accompanies your feats of derring-do comes straight from the film, which won an Oscar for Best Soundtrack. The spot effects are in the same league and make a refreshing change from 'Get over here!'.

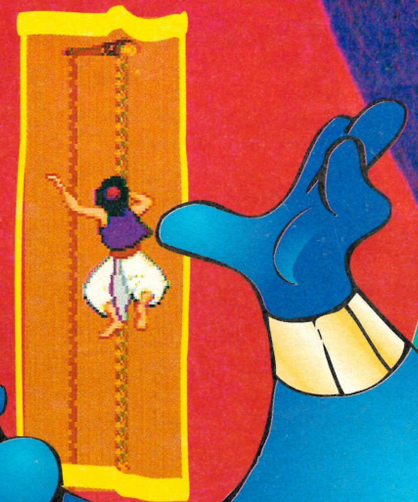
Thinking of getting *SFII* for Christmas, were you? Well don't. Get this instead.

The main disappointment of the game is that the genie isn't played by Frank Bruno.



Swinging from tree to tree, the mighty Mowgli - hang on. That's not right. Mowgli's the other one, isn't he? Oh well.





A lad in trouble



Er...well, this is an enemy. He's very naughty. He's asking for a sore bottom.

Erm...I didn't mean that kind of sore bottom. I mean he'll get a spanking if he's not careful.





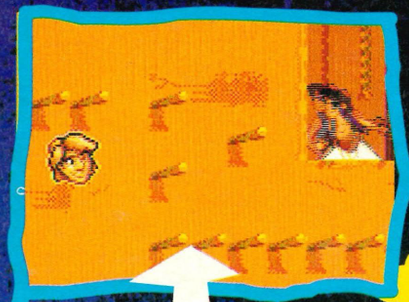
No. That's not what I meant either. I meant his Swedish au pair's going to sort him out.



Look, I didn't mean 'sort him out' like that; I just meant she'll put him over her knee and...

You've just got a dirty mind, that's all. I should take my slipper to your backside and... oh, there I go again.





'Hmm, what a remarkable resemblance to my Adonis-like good looks'.

timing results in a neatly sliced apple, and if you restart partway through a level, your body whirls out of a Genie urn. The snake charmers' ropes whisk you to different parts of the screen while you hang on for dear life, and a magic carpet appears from time to time to fly you

This bit explains what all the different thingies in the game are. Well what do you expect for £2.50? Something helpful, perhaps? Well you won't get it here. We're nasty!





Mrs Aladdin decides it's too cold for her son to play without that nice wooly hat she knitted for him last Christmas. This year she might knit him a train set.

/////// NICK 96% //////



Aladdin **is superb — we're talking sticky pyjamas material here. The kind of game you'd choose over a night of passion with all the bints out of the Corsa adverts. It's fantastic from beginning to end.**

The platform elements may *sound* tired and boring, but *Aladdin* breathes life into a kind of game I thought had both feet in the grave. But far from being six feet under, *Aladdin* shows there's a whole lot more that can be done with any game style, given a little imagination and fantastic graphics.

The animation will blow your mind (and more, if you're lucky!) and the sound's a big improvement over the kind of cack we've all become used to. Let's put it this way: if it had come out on Mega-CD, there would've been few complaints.

The people who put *Aladdin* together have scored a winner. If the film's anything like as good as this, I have a feeling I'm going to spend this Chrimbo running manically between my Mega Drive and the cinema.

A huge 'Well Done' to everyone involved with this un'. I only wish all Mega Drive games were this good.



Shortly after filming this sequence, Aladdin was arrested for cruelty to animals and got 15 years.

These lights are genuine 12th century Persian.



Honestly. It wasn't like that in my day. It was all boyish fun in the school showers.





We used to flick each other with wet towels and run screaming with excitement through the water.

We still had monitors in those days, of course. And some of the things they made their fags do still make me cringe.





And if they weren't pleased with their fags, they could beat them. Why, I remember one time… [sound of Managing Editor returning from lunch]…



…ahem! Ah, yes, the last baddie; and he's, er, big, isn't he? Um, (Needham! You're fired! hic —Man Ed)







Bonus Level



These bonus levels/sub-games are a bit plain and simple, so they suit me perfectly. You get the chance to pick up extra gems, lives, and so on.



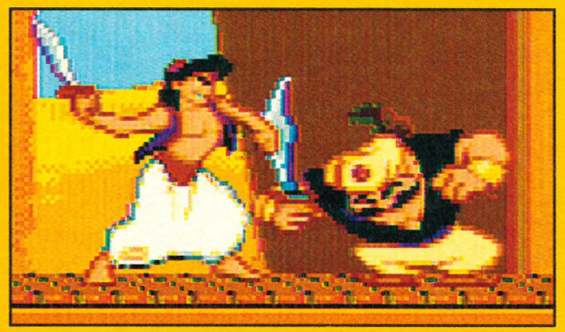


PUBLISHER	SEGA
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
SIZE	16 MEG

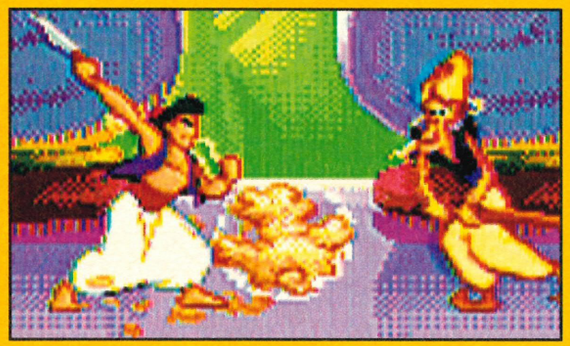
OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	3
LIVES	3-6
CONTINUES	3-6
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	GRAPHICS 'N' GAMEPLAY!

Sword Play



Mrs Aladdin warned her son not to play with the nasty rough boys but would he listen? Would he buffalo!



'It'll all end in tears', she said, 'So don't come crying to me when you get hurt.' But Aladdin could take care of himself.



Aladdin gives his rendition of Aled Jones' 'We're walking in the air...'



This lamp is, effectively, your energy bar. Clever, really, don't you think?





Yes! It's *Spiderman Vs. Aladdin: the Panto's Revenge*, in which... oh, alright, It's a lie.

////////MAT 94%///////



Picture the scene, if you can: It's a busy Monday morning in the MEGA MACHINES office and yet another bulky package wings its way into the hands of our beloved editor. With an almighty groan, he tears the envelope apart to reveal two brand-spanking new Mega Drive games.

The first is an eagerly-awaited beat-'em-up; the other is yet another Sega platform game. Crowds form as the first cartridge is put into the machine and the power switch is thrown. What a disappointment! The street combat game stays on for a minute until the onlookers disperse and two of us are left to gawp in wonder at the incredible game which replaces it.

***Aladdin* proves once again that Sega are the best when it comes to devising and developing top-notch platform games. Although it was programmed by Virgin and Disney, Sega had the sense to release it themselves.**

Every element of *Aladdin* shines. The gameplay is first rate, with massive levels to explore, tricky puzzles to solve and formidable opponents to beat. With the difficulty setting pitched just right and the original challenge of each level, it should keep you occupied for a while.

Visually, *Aladdin* ranks up there with the top games of all time. You could be fooled into thinking you're playing a real cartoon — it's that good! Even minor characters and backgrounds have animated touches that make it a joy to watch and fun to play.

***Aladdin*'s an essential Christmas purchase for all MD owners — you don't have to be a genie-us to work that one out.**



'Gosh,' said the baddy, 'you must get a new pair of pantaloons. And what's that stain?'



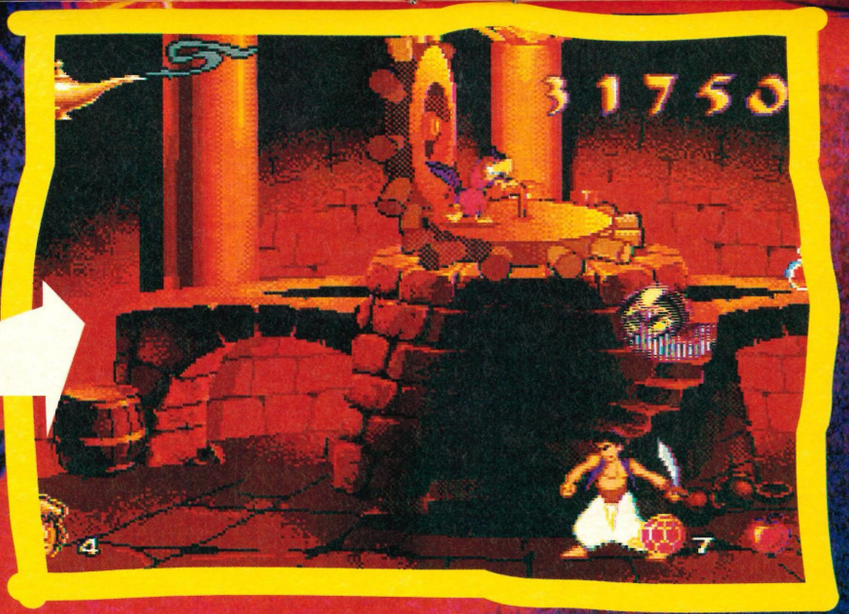
The old jumping-out-from-behind-a-rock-and-scaring-the-baddies still works a treat.





You see that pink parrot? That's you, that is. (Thankyou, Dave and Rob.)

I say, Aladdin, D'you fancy a nice game of Scrabble?



'Gordon Bennet!' the lad yelled, treading on a bent nail.







Our hero looks in need of a beer and a little lie-down.



////AL 86%/////



It's crap! What are Virgin playing at? Firstly, everyone knows *Aladdin* is set in China (I know, 'cos when I saw it at the Solihull Apollo, Bonnie Langford was wearing one o' them Raiden-style pointy hats), but what's this I see? Fat geezers in turbans, camels and loads of sand! Outrageous!

The graphics are poor. Aladdin looks like a bloke, for God's sake! Everyone knows he ought to look like Una Stubbs... or Dana or little Jimmy Krankie. They couldn't even get the Genie right — he looks nothing like Frank Bruno!

Although this cart will appeal to those with lower expectations than I (those who are keen on trivialities such as outstanding animation, amazing sonics, addictive gameplay, blah, blah), this is an enormous bodge. Maybe on later levels we finally get what we want and lock swords with John Inman, Stu Francis or that bloke who was Lofty in *EastEnders*. But don't get your hopes up.

Hopefully, Virgin will sort themselves out before they bring out *Humpty Dumpty* (starring Russ Abbot) or *Care Bears On Ice* (with Su Pollard). Until then, big disrespect goes to Virgin Games.

[Editors note: Since writing the above review, we felt it necessary to point out to Al that he was an ignorant, know-nothing twat, and unless he sorted out his life pretty soon he'd be back at his old job: selling popcorn at Richmond Odeon. He saw the logic in our suggestion and gave the cart 86%.]

GRAPHICS	98
SOUND	90
PLAYABILITY	90
LASTABILITY	93
ORIGINALITY	94
OVERALL	92

F-15 II

MEGA drive!

You know what they say: reach for the stars, but keep your feet on the ground. In their first MD venture, MicroProse hope they've come up with the perfect solution...

What with the price of today's insurance premiums, it's virtually impossible to get cover for a Golf GTi, let alone a fully-armed F-15 Strike Eagle. For starters, you'd need a huge garage, then there's the problem of getting a suitable alarm fitted... Oh, the problems are endless (so's this intro, Jim, get on with it — Ed).

Well, now you can *almost* own one with this game. But is *F-15 II* just a number? Um, dunno yet. It's going to take about an hour to read this instruction manual...

...Ha! Off we go, then. The name of the game is to work up the promotional ladder by flying missions across six combat zones and obliterating nasty countries with huge defense budgets.

Each mission has a primary and secondary target. Every time you hit a target, you get points which take you one step closer to a season ticket to the Officers' Mess.



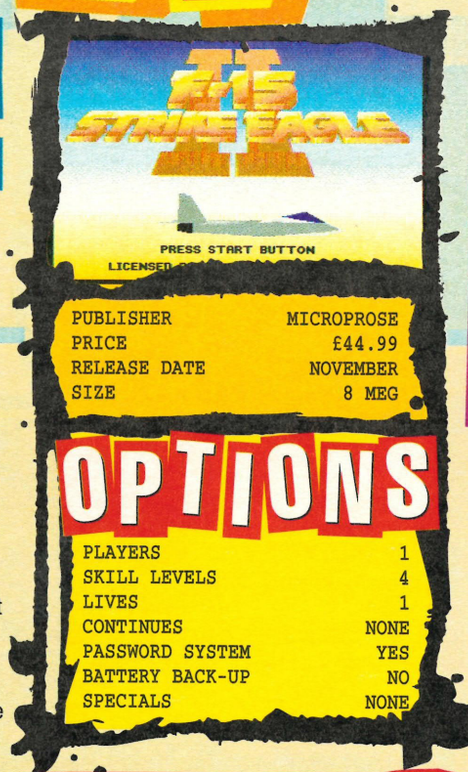
The enemy's thataway!

Once off the ground, the plane's computer subtly gives you the heading to the primary target (using a large yellow arrow), so point the plane in that direction and wait for the radar screen to go nuts.

Obviously, the enemy aren't going to sit back and wait for a couple of hundred pounds of high explosives to landscape their territory, so they're out to make your flight as rough as possible. Enemy planes and ground-to-air missiles wait until you've cleared the strip before kicking-off a game of 'Hide the guided missile up the F-15's bum'.

Don't worry, though. Your defences include a bunch of Roman Candles left over from the 5th of November ('Sunbursts') and novelty exploding tin foil pieces called (ahem) chaff. Bet ya feel safe now!

Missiles, work your magic





/////AL 73%/////



It's pretty obvious MicroProse are after a big slice of the Mega Drive pie, but in order to do what they do best (that is, flight sims of varying complexity), they had to compromise.

As you probably know, MicroProse have cornered the computer market for flight combat sims, all of them deep and complex (just like me, ladies) and all using more buttons than a Pearly King's catsuit. Most Mega Drive joypads, however, haven't even enough buttons for a decent game of *Street Fighter II*, which left the programmers with the metaphorical problem of fitting Chris Eubank's ego into a matchbox.

Fair play to them, they nearly pulled it off. I say nearly, because although they've crammed in as many things as possible into three buttons and a D-pad, if you want to access the options which make flight sims worthwhile (outside and cockpit views, missile camera etc), you have to pause the game and fiddle with the pad. This stop-start activity got right on my wick, especially as you have to do plenty of dull flying before you get to shoot something.

The main problem with *F-15 II* is that it falls between two stools: it doesn't know whether to be a shoot-'em-up or full-blown sim, and in the end fails to be either. That doesn't make it a bad game, just a confusing proposition to anyone looking for either full-tilt action or thoughtful strategy

There's a hefty challenge and MD owners resentful of their PC-owning brethren will be suitably entertained, but until someone comes up with an MD keyboard (Er... they have! It's only available in the States, though, and there's b-all software support for it. Transmission ends —Man Ed), games like *F-15 II* are doomed to be mere shadows of what they could be.

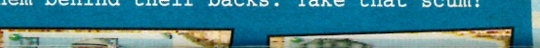
Makes a change from all those chuffin' platformers, though...



Biggles lifted the bird majestically from the ship, then crapped himself

Bad Lands

Your missions, if you decide to take them, are to generally mash the enemy, crush their installations, replace their wrist watches with cheap imitations, cancel all their standing orders (that should annoy them), and if you miss your Primary and Secondary targets, talk about them behind their backs. Take that scum!





Strapped to the underside of your F-15 are three weapons systems. You've two classes of missiles: long range, air-to-air AMRAAMS and air-to-ground Mavericks. And finally, the noisiest weapon of the lot, the 20mm cannon (not to be confused with photocopiers or point-and-press cameras). The cannon has two operational modes: one for ground targets and one for not-on-the-ground targets.

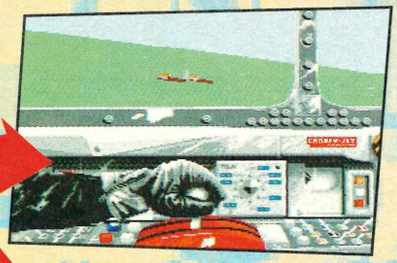
We'll leave everything else for the instruction manual to explain.

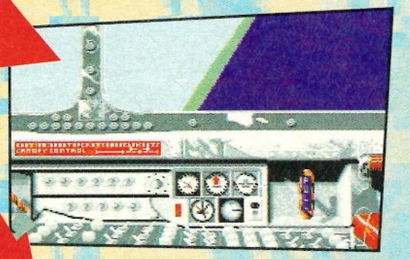
You start on any of four ranks (Rookie to Ace), depending on how brave you feel; the higher the rank, the more control you have over the plane.

Obviously, it's a good idea to start off on Rookie and train as you play, instead of jumping straight in as an Ace. This gives *F-15 II* loads of levels and you the chance to get to grips with one of the most powerful air combat machines ever built.



Cockpit views









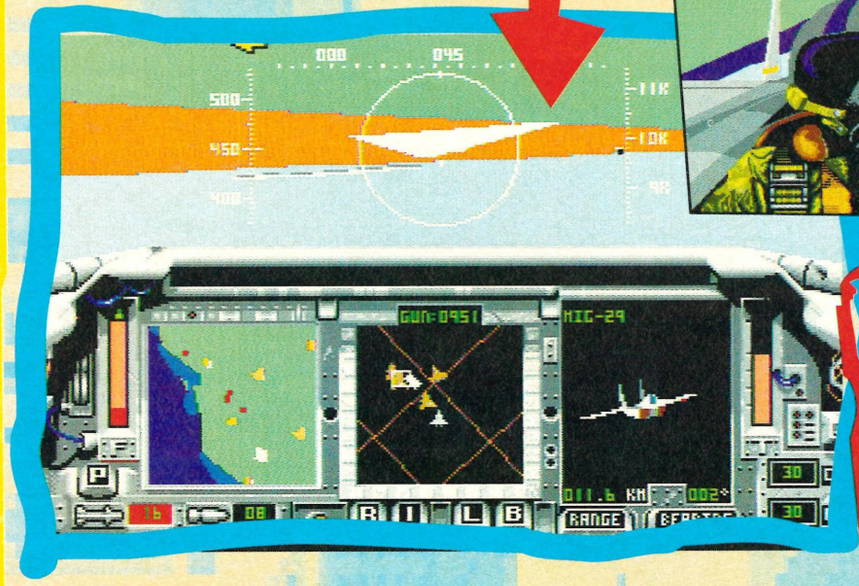


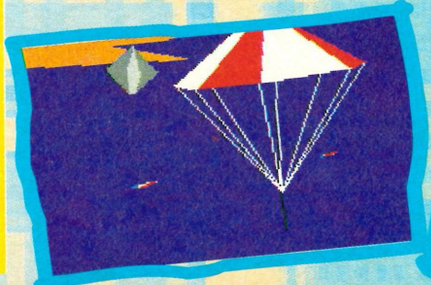
















Four heads are better than one - which has got absolutely nothing to do with this picture. Erm, sorry.

//JAMES///
///79%///



F-15 II doesn't immediately jump up and tell you what it's all about. It's no Afterburner and it ain't as complicated as the typical PC flight sim, but draws elements from both and mixes 'em up with a blob of strategy. But it seems a couple of vital ingredients were left out.

One of the biggest problems is that the controls are fiddly. You get the impression it was a struggle cramming so many functions on one joypad — and why bother when there's a six-button pad available, or even the player two 'stick going free?

Despite the different war zones, ranks and missions, it's very samey. When it comes to the crunch, every objective involves taking off, pointing the plane towards the targets, letting off the right missile at the right time, flying back and landing the bugger. Of course, you get the obligatory bad guys trying to blow you out of the sky along the way, but the level-to-level action is more frustrating than gripping.

Aspects of the graphics let the game down. Playing *F-15 II* on a 14" monitor, it's difficult to pick up on screen messages which flash up or decipher vital information from radar and other facilities at your disposal.

Basically, no matter how good the original game was, the conversion has been let down by the capabilities and facilities of the MD. Maybe a more approachable CD version's waiting in the wings, but for the time being, *F-15 II* will only appeal to a fraction of the market. So check it out before you part with the cash!

GRAPHICS	50
SOUND	86
PLAYABILITY	48
LASTABILITY	62
ORIGINALITY	75
OVERALL	76

STREET FIGHTER II

MEGA drive!

It's been hyped, re-hyped, and hyped again! But now, Ladies and Gentlemen, *Street Fighter II: Special Champion Edition*, has officially arrived. At bloody last!

Back in November 1992, Mega Drive owners all over the world thought, 'Hurrah! We've stiffed those SNES owners at their own game.' Yup, Super Nintendo owners were going to be so miffed 'cos they'd only been given eight characters to mess around with, while 12 would be on offer on the MD.

And then... *Street Fighter:* flippin' *Turbo* flippin' *Edition* springs out of the woodwork. Thank you, Capcom.

Anyway, if you don't know about *Street Fighter II* by now, welcome to our planet and here's what it's all about: You've the choice of 12 fighters, each with their own standard and special moves. Fights take place as a best of three bouts (so you've got to win two of them) and basically you batter your opponent about until they fall on the floor and don't get up. Simple, huh?

Wrrroonnngggggg. It takes a while to learn all the characters' special moves and how to use them to full effect, and then there's different combinations of moves, which moves work best against other characters and... where did that list go?

Take away the crutches!

All the *Street Fighter* action we've come to know and love has been crammed onto this fat 24 Meg cart, plus an extra fighting mode. Championship mode has a few extra moves over the original and, more importantly, you can control the bosses.

Beat-'em-up Review







Ooh, I bet he's bricking it! Ryu kicks the, er, brick out of a big pile...



Roll out the barrel, we'll have a barrel of (Thump! Try again –Ed)





////JAMES 91%/////



It's a miracle people aren't cringing at the very mention of *Street Fighter II* by now (I bloody am! —Sub Ed). But it's still raking in thousands at the arcades and this MD cart's set to be one of the biggest sellers over Christmas.

I've got to admit, I was a little dubious whether it would live up to the arcade and SNES legends. Okay, the Mega Drive's graphics are more functional than what we've seen on other formats, but they're adequate.

The sounds, however, are far from brilliant. The digitised speech makes the characters sound like they're suffering from acute laryngitis, not the 15 stones of pure testosterone you'd expect (with the exception of Chun Li, who's more 12 stones of P.M.T).

My only other beef is with three-button pads. It's a joke trying to play a decent game with the things! Combos are impossible if they comprise of kicks and punches, special move sequences are a nightmare and you can't toggle the buttons if you're dazed or in a lock. I played for half an hour then gave up.

With the full six buttons, though, it plays like a dream, full of naked women covered in... Ahem, er, and for that, we can forgive its shortcomings — and even the 60 quid price tag.

Street Fighter II: SCE is *the* beat-'em-up to have in your cart collection — but don't bother buying it until you've got enough dosh for the joypads as well!





Ken pulls off a Dragon Punch in an effort to impress the elephants. What a prat, eh?



Guile's flash kick is a bit, well, 'flash' really. Pull down for a couple of sec's, then up with a kick button to execute...



Bison shows off his special double-egg-whisk-whirley curly-thingie move to great effect.



STREET FIGHTER II

SPECIAL CHAMPION EDITION

The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!

In Championship, some characters are a lot tougher than others. For example, Bison is a right sonuvabitch to play against and just as tough to control, while Chun Li and Dhalsim are weak by comparison.

Hyper Fighting's a jazzed-up version of Championship mode. Moves have been added or enhanced and selectable speed puts slow and tactical players in unfamiliar quarters, but this time the characters have been evened out and there's no obvious advantage in selecting a boss character.

Street Fighter IISFII either in the arcades or on a SNES, so it's like learning to walk (with all the associated praise and parental encouragement), then — WALLOP! — your dad lops off one of your legs.

Playing with an ordinary pad is almost unbearable, so you should include a pair of six-button joypads in the investment when you buy this ultimate beat-'em-up.



Various bonus rounds crop up in the game, which involve causing maximum damage to all manner of stuff like cars and barrels. Here, Ryu demonstrates his own unique brand of panel bashing…



/SIMON THE CELEB 89%/



Simon Hill is the office *Street Fighter II* champion so we thought he'd have something to say on the subject — even if he does work on SNES Force magazine. Take it away, Simon…

I couldn't stop laughing when I heard the sound effects from the other end of the office — I thought one of the MEGA MACHINES lads had broken the TV. But I've had a bash at Mega Drive *Street Fighter II* now and, to be honest, I'm very pleasantly surprised.

It's faster than I expected it to be, and as for the graphics, I never thought that crap piece of black plastic would be capable (stick to the script, Simon, or I'll break your legs! —James). All the moves are there and it plays as smoothly as the Nintendo game, although I reckon the Sega version's a bit easier.

I didn't like the three-button thing — it transforms the immortal *Street Fighter II* into an average beat-'em-up. You need all six buttons to play the game as it was intended.

Oh, and by the way, Sega's a load of… *CRUNCH!*

Thank you, Simon, we'll call you an ambulance when the swelling dies down…





STREET FIGHTER II'

SPECIAL CHAMPION EDITION

CHAMPION
HYPER

PUBLISHER	CAPCOM
PRICE	£59.99
RELEASE DATE	NOW
SIZE	24 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	8
LIVES	1
CONTINUES	INFINITE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	SIX-BUTTON JOYPAD

Honda delivers a lethal volley of thousand hand slaps… right in the groin region, too. Not very sporting of the fat man, is it?



Blanka uses his special X-Ray Spex to examine the bone structure of his enemies, before going in for the kill.



Who spilt your pint?


M. Bison


Zangief


Balrog


Blanka


Ryu


Vega


Chun-Li


Dhalsim


Guile


E. Honda


Ken


Sagat

GRAPHICS	89
SOUND	62
PLAYABILITY	95
LASTABILITY	92
ORIGINALITY	70
OVERALL	90

20 with three buttons

Blanka lets rip with an almighty bottom burp. Can Zangeif take this kind of punishment?



/STEVE 91%/



What can you possibly say about Street Fighter II that hasn't been said before? With the possible exception of the Sonic and Mario games, there have been more column inches and screen shots devoted to this on-the-surface run-of-the-mill beat'-em-up than any other release. Okay, so it's an excellent blast, and the conversion is without fault (apart from the sound, which is completely shizzzff-ssptpt!),so if you like beat-'em-up games, go buy it! Oh yeah, and grab a couple of six button pads while you're about it, coz I'd only give it 62% without 'em.





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James Pond 3

Operation Starfi5h

MEGA drive!

F.I.5.H's top secret agent, James Pond, finally returns for his third platform adventure. It's bigger and better than all his previous games put together, but we still prefer its original title, *Splash Gordon*.





PUBLISHER	ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE	£44.99
RELEASE DATE	EARLY DECEMBER
SIZE	16 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	NONE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE

Platform Review



Poor piscine puns ahoy! Yes, the fish with the death wish, James Pond, returns in *Operation Starfish*, the latest adventure involving our aquatic hero's attempts to thwart the fiendish Dr Maybe.

What dastardly plan is Dr M plotting, you ask? Go on then, *ask*. No? Well, we'll tell you anyway. He's only gone and discovered that the Moon is made of cheese, cream, yoghurt and other dairy products, hasn't he?

The evil Doc's master plan is to monopolise the world's cheese markets by mining top quality Moon products and therefore (it goes without saying) bring about the end of mankind as we know it. Sad day! And of course, it's up to you, as Pond, to foil the morally-challenged

Jumping from platform to platform, our intrepid hero punches the lights out of, throws teeth at, jumps on the heads of, and shoots assorted fruit and tea-time confectionery at nasties ranging from surprisingly dumb rats to fat women with tubs of lard on their heads — and that's only in the first couple of levels!

Punjab Airways

Lots of the collectables are in a less surreal vein, with items like dynamite and spring boots behaving much as you'd expect

Fab Fins To Collect!

Oooo, a nice cup of tea. Thanks ever so matey poos!



Blimey! It's a big stick of dynamite. Drop it quick!



An umbrella. Enables Pond to control his fall…



Bombs are activated by dropping 'em, and blow after five seconds.



Say 'Cheese!' Okay then, don't bother, it don't do much, anyway!



doctor's devilishly dire and diabolical designs to direct the deadly destruction of this dim but dear planet of ours (that's enough alliteration —Sub Ed).

Lard-ass ladies

Luckily, F.I.5.H's top secret agent has a 100% success rate of wiping-out villains with a single swish of his tail. He's got over a hundred levels of fishtastic finfoolery (I'd just like to interrupt this review to say what a cool word 'finfoolery' is, and that I invented it. Thank you —Al) to jump and blast his way through before he confronts Dr Maybe.

Pond's got a few tricks up his fish equivalent of a sleeve. First of all, from the moment you see him, you're going to want him to finish the adventure. He's got a cross between Sonic's cuteness with attitude and Cool Spot's attitude with, er, cuteness.

(ie, blowing things up and boinging James very high), but the odd ones behave, er, oddly. The thruster, for example, allows Pond to hover... and also fire yoghurt, for some reason. Hmm.

Our mate Jimmy has another secret agent to help him, the famous Finnius Frog. No, not the maker of exotic foodstuffs from Medomsley Road, Conset, but an enthusiastic agent who's recently completed his training — and been captured. As soon as Finnius is rescued, he joins Pond's adventure to rid the universe of that evil but indecisive doctor, though why anyone would want a dumb rookie on their side is a mystery.

James Pond 3: Operation Starfish is bloomin' huge and bloomin' funny. And for all you 'Frog'-speaking peeps out there, this is the 'fin'.



James' adversary, the Mush-Beast, looks resplendent in one of Princess Diana's old hats. God bless 'em! They do a great job! (Mushrooms, that is)

Some kind of multi-directional thing – we only found it once!

A cheesy moon. There are more of these than rings in Sonic.

Big bonus points are awarded for collecting coins.



Eat Golden Delicious, Sucka! With the fish-like stud's apple gun, getting shot was never so good for you teeth...







James says: "Remember, kids, never go back to a lit firework, don't use a naked flame, and don't listen to East 17. They're rubbish".



BOOM! Shake shake shake the, er, cave? See how the dynamite destroys all in it's path! Impressed? Whaddya mean, 'no'?



///////STEVE 93%/////



What an amazing game! I loved the original James Pond release on the Amiga, with its wacky humour, great graphics and polished gameplay. But the sequel's a pile of cack on any system, as far as I'm concerned, so it was with trepidation that I banged this, er, threequel into the slot.

If the truth be known, I actually put off playing *Pond 3* for as long as was realistically possible; I couldn't bear to see the glory of the original tarnished any further. I'm kicking myself now, though, as I've only managed to get a third of the way through the beggar — it's *huuuuuge*!

Faster than *Sonic* (I kid you not) with stacks to see and do, the only thing that eclipses the great gameplay is the humour. It's hilarious! Rib-tickling pick-ups are generously littered around the colourful landscapes (check out those side-splitting spring boots), while various puzzles tax the old grey matter to exactly the right degree: never frustrating, but rarely obvious.

A massive challenge for platform fans and arcade adventurers alike, if I only bought one game this month (and I already owned *Sensi Soccer*!), this'd be it. Magic.

***And* I've managed a whole comment without one fish-type pun...**

/////////AL 82%/////////



The first of an occasional series entitled Video Game Reviewing — The Dosser's Guide. This month, Al Needham shows you how to review James Pond carts with minimal effort:

'Ay-up, me ducks! Basically, the thing to remember when reviewing games such as *Op Starfish* is to chuck in as many fish-related puns as possible. The kids love it, it only takes a few minutes and, most importantly, it's a good doss. Here are a just a few choice examples...'

Cod: a statement of exclamation, eg, 'Good *cod*! This is a vast improvement on the last *James Pond* cart, and no mistake!'

Plaice: used to describe the many and varied locations this incredibly deep platform romp has to offer; 'There's over a hundred different *plaices* for him to explore.'

Scales: bit of a cheap one, this, but adequately gets across the way EA have improved the platform genre; 'The way James *scales* buildings with his anti-gravity boots offers a new dimension of gameplay.'

Undersea: an extremely puerile attempt to impress the readers with a bit of 'street' talk; 'Yo, this game's so cool, crazy and clever, you'll find it *undersea* in the phone book.'

Batter: used to describe the difficulty level; 'The main drawback is the cart's toughness. You take a good *batter*ing right from the start, which will put some people off, but it offers a good challenge to the accomplished player.'

Fishing puns: a bit obvious but v effective in describing the long-term playability; 'Hey, this is one game you'll be *fishing* out of your collection for years to come. It gets its *hooks* into you and doesn't let go.'

'And there we have it. Just a few examples which show how, with just a little fish knowledge, you too can knock off a review in the blink of an eye and spend the rest of the day by the coffee machine. ABC ya!'

Next Month: we show you how to avoid one of the biggest problems in console journalism — how to review *Street Fighter II* without mentioning Limahl out of Kajagoogoo.



This rat reckons your Dad's a puff. What you gonna do about it?



It's a Desert Rat. Gerrit? Desert Rats? Tanks? Ho ho ho!



Oooo! I could do with one o' them up against me door.



God, I hope he's not doing to that green bloke what I think he is...

The rat in the blue jacket thought that was a pathetic joke.



"What a sad caption below me" thought another rat.





Ahhh, it's a little chicky-wicky... that explodes in your face!

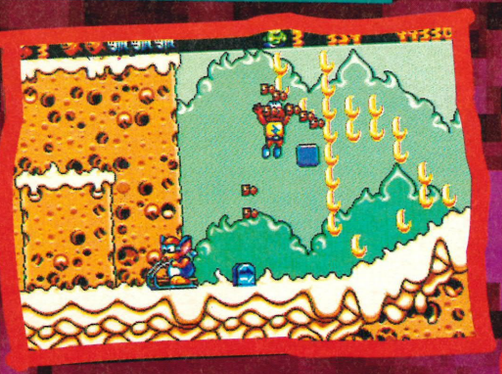


This rat can't believe the crap caption on the right.



It's a Gunstar Hero, innit? Gun-Star? Tee hee hee! (You're fired —Ed)

A boxful of N-A-S-T-I-E-S!

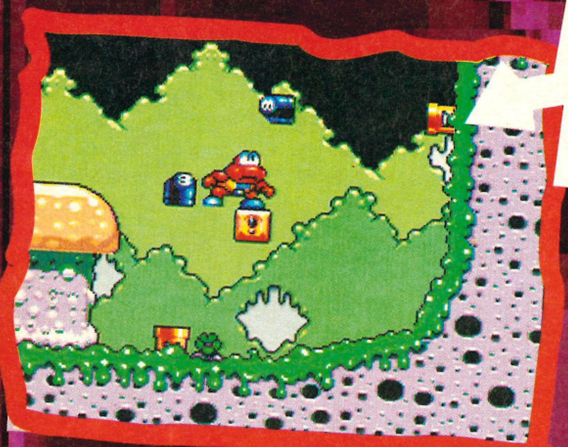






Cheesy moons, oh cheesy moons, how I love those lovely tunes. Eh?

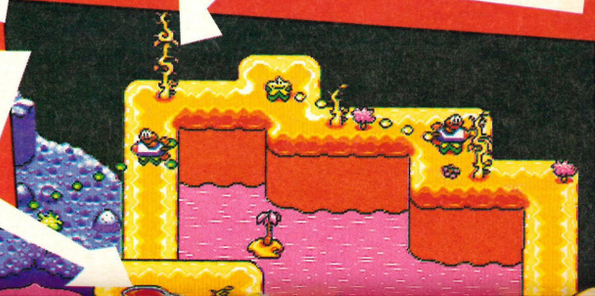
Some parts of the map, like this squiggly tree-type thing here for example, don't actually refer to a definite location. But they don't half look good, d'ya reckon?



Bullets above him. Bullets to the left of him. A little overtime may be required on this one, Mr Pond.



Moving on arounmd the map, we have... Wait a minute! So that's where I put me coffee down. Aw, it's gone bleedin' cold now!



(Engaging sensible mode.) CLICK! This gives you some idea of how

big the game is. The play area is absolutely massive and… (Disengaging sensible mode.) CLICK! Wibble wibble sproing, Mrs Jones.

Agent Pond is out in the field. We can't see Agent Pond because he's camouflaged. Stand up, Agent Pond. Agent Pond? Oh, sorry, that's a small shrub.

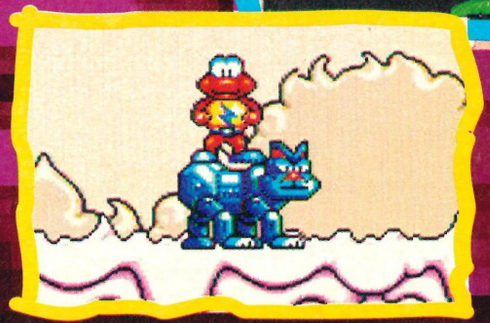
Custard! Now we're talking. Oo, how I lurve custard

So, you think this is a tree, eh? Well seein' as you reckon you're so smart, what kind of tree is it? Ha! Don't know, do yer? Thicko.











GRAPHICS	79
SOUND	75
PLAYABILITY	83
LASTABILITY	88
ORIGINALITY	76
OVERALL	88

The Write Brothers!

From page 21...

GAMESMASTER 3

I first had to play my game. I was a bit nervous so I didn't do too well on that, then I had to play *Addams Family 2* on a SNES, without being told what the controls were!

I think I did quite well on that — I found a few hidden bonuses and opened a secret door. While playing the game, I had to answer a few questions like what type of games I like, from the person watching my progress.

Out of the 200 people who went for the audition, a hundred would be a contestant on *Gamesmaster* and the others would ask questions in the Consolation Zone. Ten days after the audition, I received a letter which said I'd qualified to be a contestant.

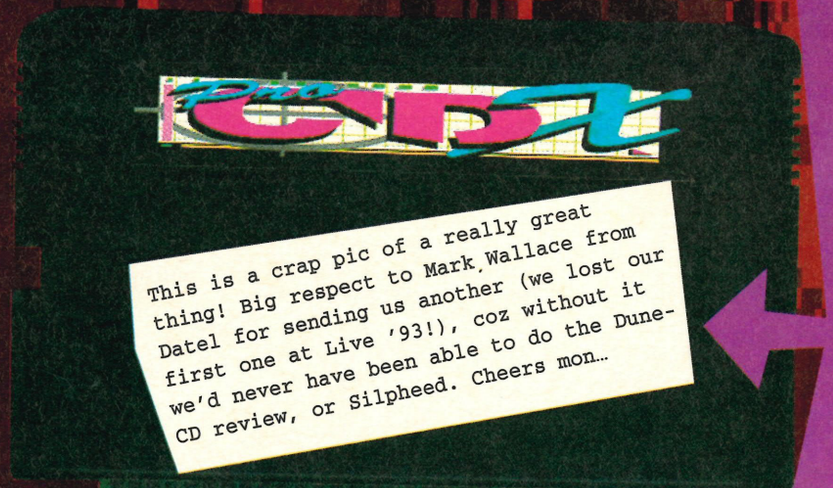
I was very nervous but also very excited about going on *Gamesmaster* — if I lost my challenge, I'd lose in front of millions of people!

See ya!

Tim Anglish, Sega Land

Nick: ***Thanks for that info, and belated good luck on you TV appearance.***

Nige: ***Fletcher Dexter is a git!***



ALIVE AND KICKING

Dear Write Bros

A week ago, I went into Games Computer Store and asked the assistant when *SFII*'s coming out on the Mega Drive; he said September. Very helpful, I thought, this *is* September! Secondly, I asked if I got it from America, would it work on my British Mega Drive; he replied that I'd need a US Converter.

A few days later I went into **Virgin Games Centre** and asked the same questions. The assistant said *Street Fighter II*'s coming out on September 21st and to play it on my British Mega Drive I'd have to buy a code-lock system or something like that.

My friend from America said the game's been out for a month over there! Who should I believe?

Please help me, I'd be very grateful.

Diljut Singh, Inhalsa

Nick: ***Well Diljut, it seems all of them are misinformed. A reliable source (my mum, actually, who makes a lovely egg-nog) tells me SFII was due in October but there's been no fixed date. As for your adaptor problems, Datel Electronics make a smashing little add-on called the Universal Adaptor, which should serve you well.***

Nige: ***I've got an adaptor that fits on the end of my...***

MEGA MACHINES CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

_____

THE TROUSER-BUSTING SCORE OF

_____

ON THE MEGA DRIVE/CD GAME

_____

honest.

CERTIFIED!

Nige: ***GCSEs? Waste of paper! BA Honours degrees? Not fit to wipe a dog's bum with! There's only ONE qualification guaranteed to impress future employers, friends, and the birds — a MEGA MACHINES certificate of Mega Drive excellence!***

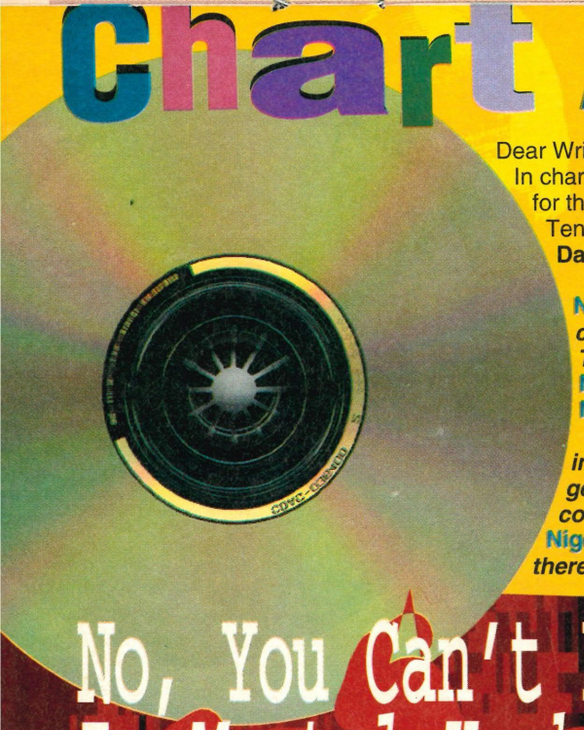
Nick: ***Yes, now you can preserve your best scores on this stylish and official-looking document. Simply fill it out...***

Nige: ***No cheating neither, right? Or I'll cave yer 'ead in!***

Nick: ***Indeed. Then cut it out, place it in a position of prominence and — voila! Instant mash... I mean, cred!***

Nige: ***Lie and you die, right?***

Chart Attack!



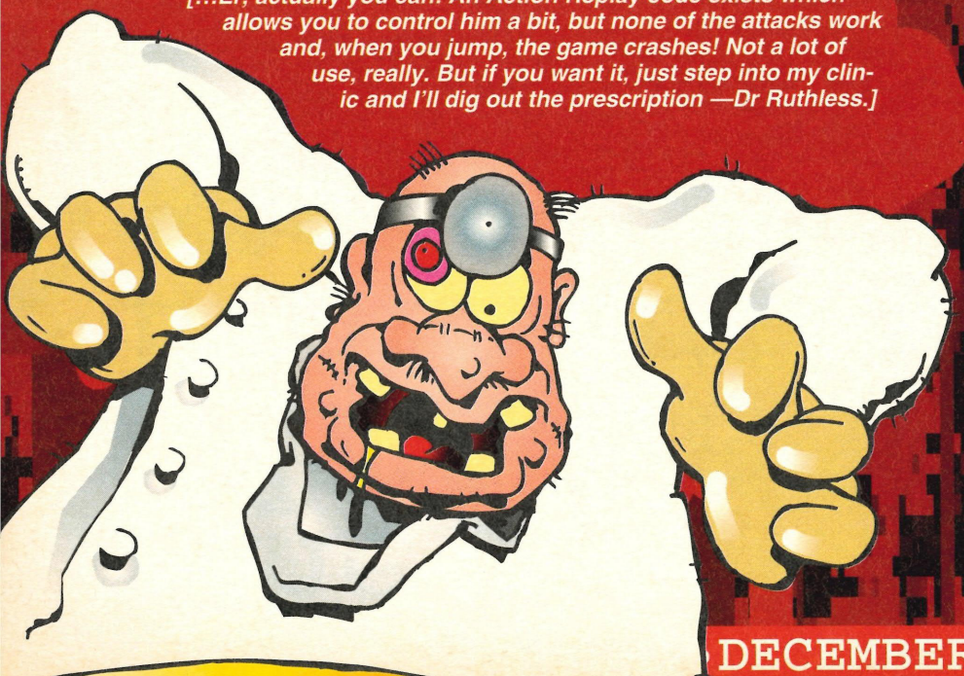
Dear Write Brothers
In charts pages, magazines have American, Japanese and official charts for the Mega Drive. What I want to know is, when will you print a Top Ten chart for the Mega-CD? There are plenty of games.
David Lynch, Kirk Newton

Nick: ***At the moment, David, I'm afraid there aren't enough official CD releases to make a competitive, ever-changing Top Ten.***
Nige: ***I thought it was because most CD games are crap.***
Nick: ***Oh, go back to chewing your banana!***
We're looking into the viability of a CD chart and may include one in a couple of issues. A flock of Sega gamers will get a Mega-CD for Christmas then game releases and sales will come thick and fast.
Nige: ***Yeah? Well I just had a word with the Ed, and he reckons there'll be one in THIS issue. Then he ponced a fag off me — git.***

No, You Can't Be Goro In *Mortal Kombat*

Dear Write Brothers
Can you be Goro in *Mortal Kombat*?
Simon Pringle, Nottingham

Nick & Nige: ***No***
[…Er, actually you can! An Action Replay code exists which allows you to control him a bit, but none of the attacks work and, when you jump, the game crashes! Not a lot of use, really. But if you want it, just step into my clinic and I'll dig out the prescription —Dr Ruthless.]



INFINITE LIFE — MEGA DRIVE DEATH

Dear Write Brothers
Here's a cheat to get infinite lives on *Strider*. Insert any game made by Sega (for example, *Super Thunder Blade*) and switch the power on. When the word 'Sega' appears, take out whatever cart you're using and insert *Strider* without switching your Mega Drive off. Reset *Strider* and when you start the game you'll have infinite lives.
Sam Pritchard, Telford

Nick: ***Error!***
Nige: ***Extreme error!***
Nick: ***Sam, what are you saying? Don't you realise how dangerous that is?***
Nige: ***I wouldn't even do that, and I'm a nutter, me!***
Nick: ***Putting aside the small fact that your MD has a built-in cartridge lock to prevent you from doing things like that, pulling out carts with the power still on is the Mega Drive equivalent of smoking 50 Marlboros through each nostril in one go, then taking a bath in a tub of boiling chip fat. That is to say, not recommended.***
Nige: ***Believe me, I've tried it. Murder on the old snotbox…***

COMPATIBILITY CHAOS



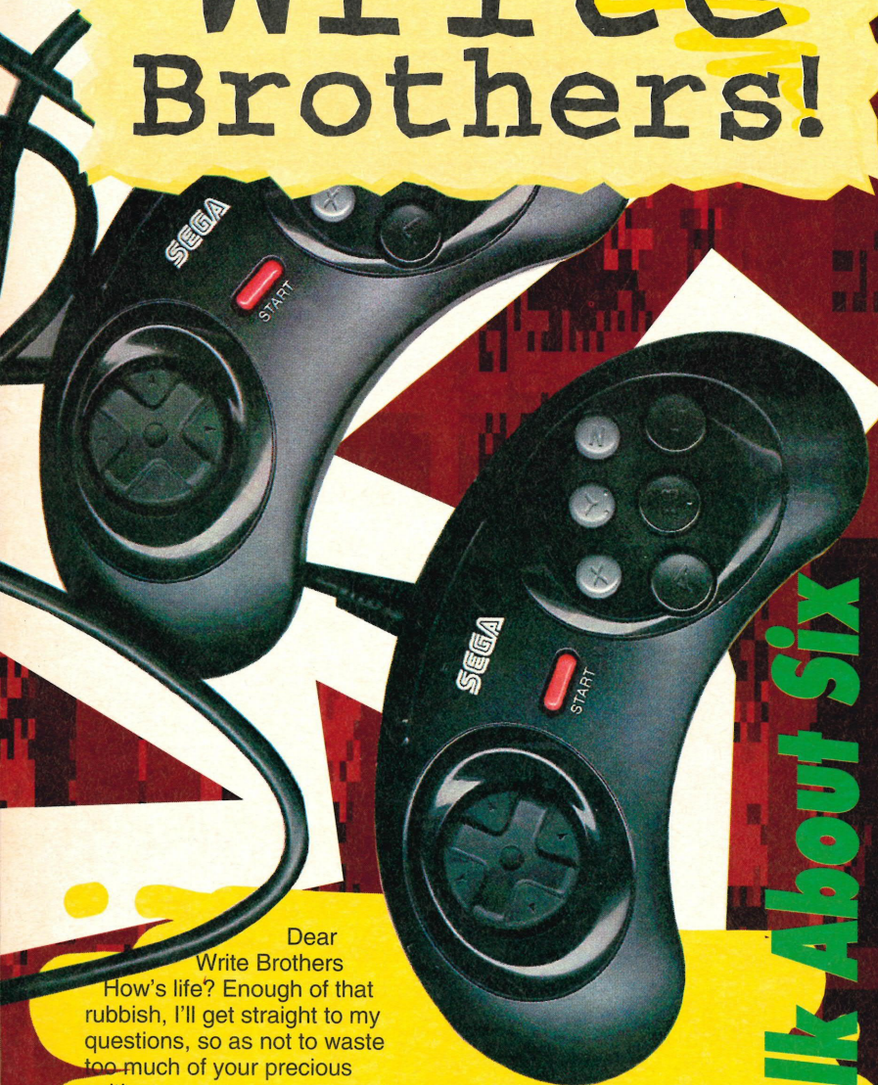
Dear
Write Bros
Can the Mega Drive 1 fit onto the Mega-CD 2; secondly, do the Mega-CD units have an attachment for the 32-bit; and last but not least, does the Mega-CD play normal music CDs?
That's all for now. Bye.
R A Martin, Leeds

Nick: ***Luckily, Mr Martin, the Mega Drive 1 fits on the Mega-CD 2; the same applies to the Mega Drive 2 and Mega-CD 1. They're compatible due to a handy adaptor that comes with the Mega-CD 2 and may be sold separately, too.***
Sega are still denying all knowledge of their hush-hush 32-bit console [Stop press! See the news section —Ed] and when it eventually appears, its unlikely to be compatible with the 16-bit Mega-CD. But yes, you can play music discs on Mega-CD units.
Nige: ***You could always get one of those Bosch power tools and carve a bit off your Mega Drive. If it doesn't work, hunt down the salesman and do the same to him — he won't work afterwards, either! Ha ha!***
Nick: ***I don't think that's a very nice thing to do, actually Nigel.***

It's a Kinda Magic

Dear Write Brothers
I keep hearing of these add-ons for the MD and am mug enough to keep buying them. This is all well and good but what I really want is something I could add on which will let me create games, then perhaps have some way of storing my efforts to show my friends and maybe software houses and earn millions of quid! What do you reckon?
Another thing: reading

The Write Brothers!



Let's Talk About Six

Dear Write Brothers

How's life? Enough of that rubbish, I'll get straight to my questions, so as not to waste too much of your precious writing space.

Could you please tell me which six-button joystick is the best buy and how much is it?

I've got to go now, the dog's broken lose. See ya!

Richard Hate

Nick: ***At the moment, the only six-button joypads available aren't, strictly speaking, six-button joypads.***

Nige: ***Eh?***

Nick: ***The three extra buttons are merely turbo buttons. The bona fide six-button joypad, released to coincide with*** **Street Fighter II,** ***costs £14.99.***

Nige: ***I've got an adaptor...***

Nick: ***No!***

Sonic: Streets Ahead?

Dear Nick 'n' Nige

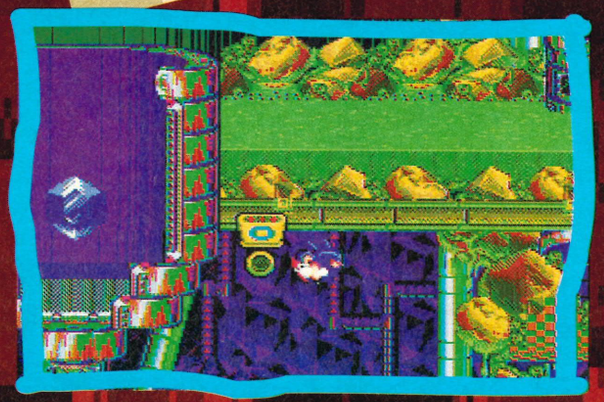
I have heard that *Sonic 3* will be out in January/late February 1994 and not out for Christmas. I've also heard *Sonic 3* will be the best of games with a 24-Meg cart. Is this true or what?

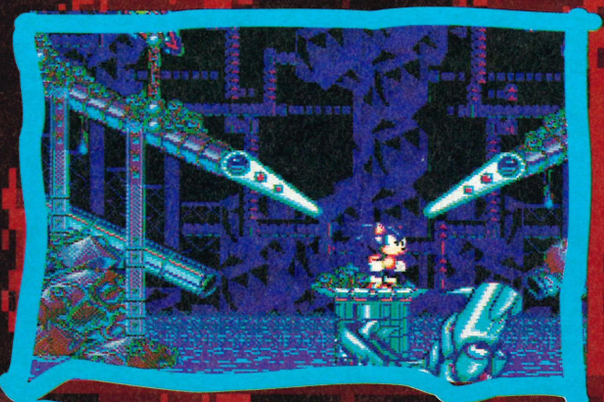
Is *SFII: Special Champion Edition* coming out in late October and will there be a free gift with the game, as I heard it will be bundled with the new six-button joypad. Is this true?

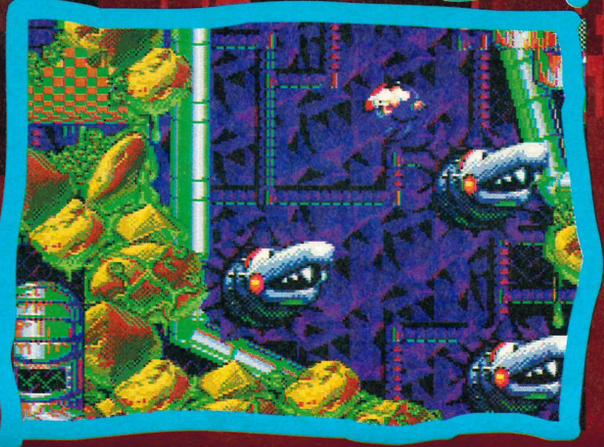
I would like to know which of the following games are coming out before Christmas: *Sonic Spinball, Aladdin, Jurassic Park* and *Sonic Chaos* on the Game Gear. Also, is *Virtua Racing* out before December, as I heard it isn't arriving until the start of 1994. Is this true?

Thanks.

Glenn Maguire, N Ireland







Nige: ***I don't eat shamrocks, I 'ate 'em!***

Nick: ***Er, yes... We will have to wait till the New Year for*** **Sonic 3.** ***The new trend of monster 24-Meg carts may extend to the hedgehog's third fully-fledged adventure and it's sure to be one of the better Mega Drive games.***

Nige: ***I like to batter games — and people!***

Nick: ***I said 'better', cloth ears!***

Free gift? Even Sega aren't **that** ***generous, so you'll have to pay extra for six-button joypads. It'll be worth it, though, as more and more games will support them.***

All the Game Gear carts are due in time for Christmas but **Virtua Racing** ***is unlikely. It's the first game to use the ultra-fast Super Processing chip — Sega's answer to Nintendo's much-flaunted Super FX — so it won't see the light of day until it's highly polished.***

Set Fire To Ian Beale

Dear Write Brothers

Don't you think it'd be a cool idea if someone did a beat 'em up game, like *Mortal Kombat*, but with an added bonus - you get to choose who you can mash up?

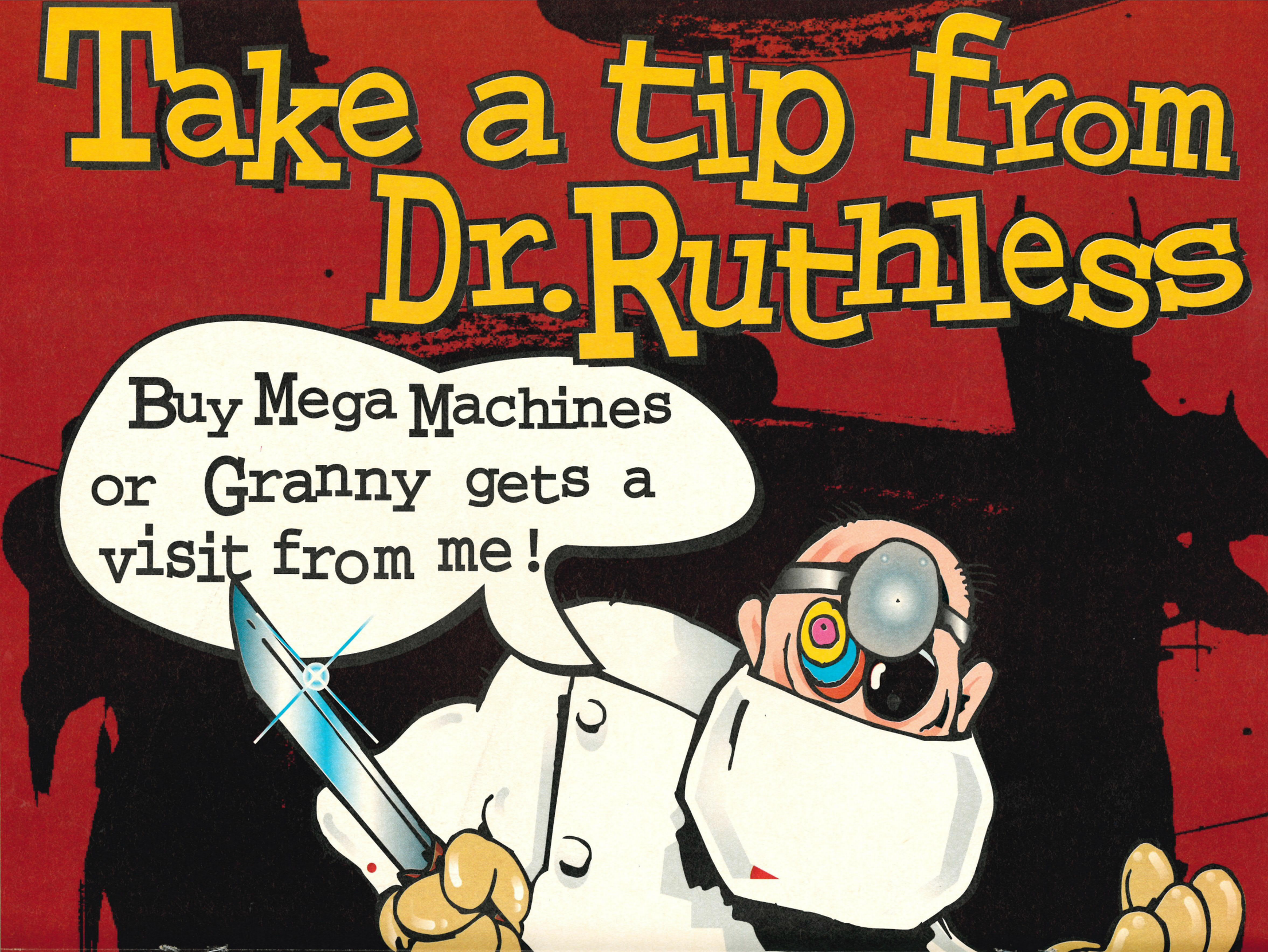
At the beginning of the game, for example, there's a list of sad people, like John Major, and you pick some of them.

NIGE: Oh gawd, 'ere he goes again – choppin' the letters in half. I'll get my chopper and give 'im a nasty turn in a minute!

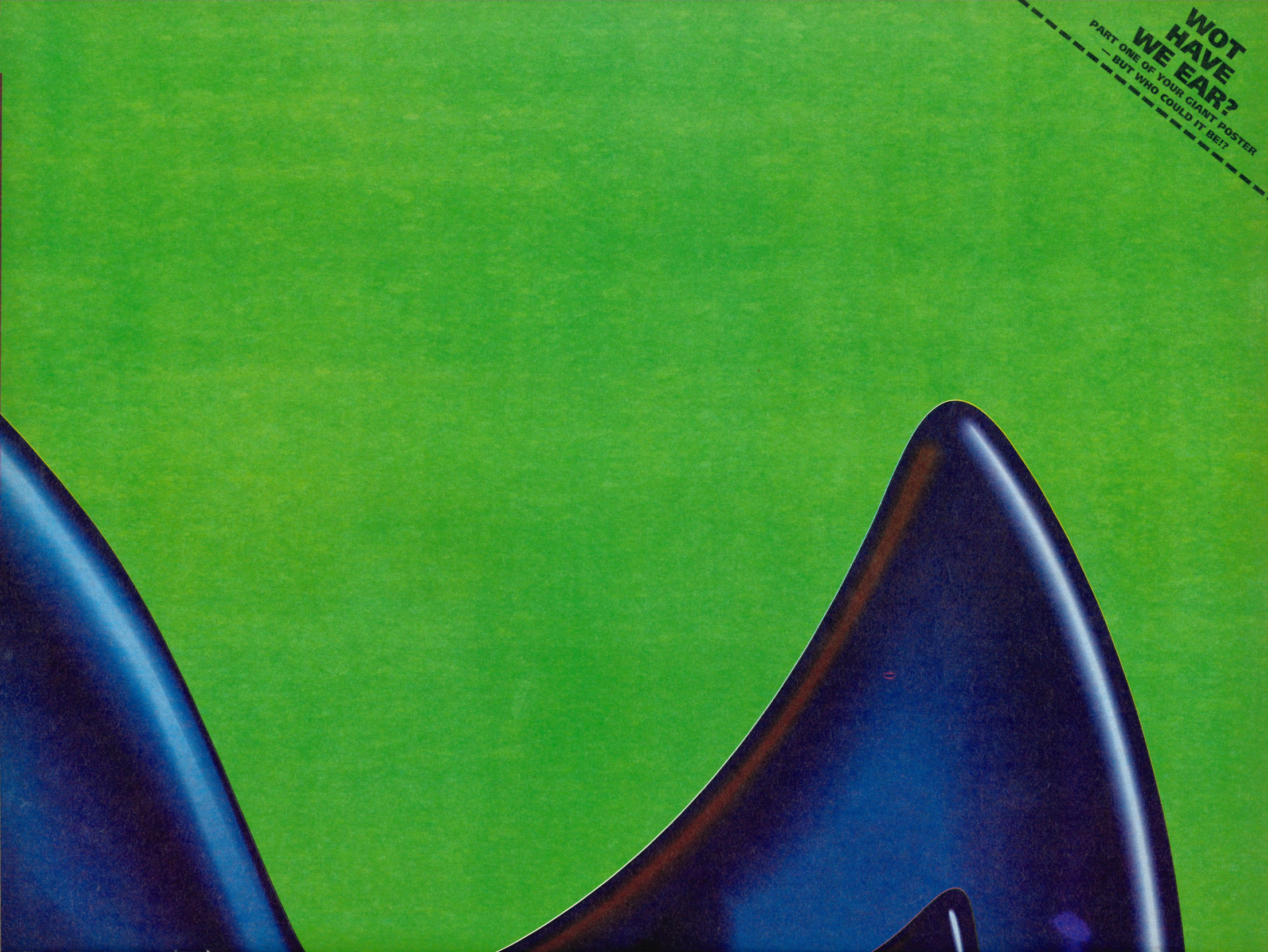
NICK: Oh Nigel, put it away, will you? It's not big, and it's not hard – eh? What am I saying? Um, turn to page 88, readers, quick!



Take a tip from Dr. Ruthless

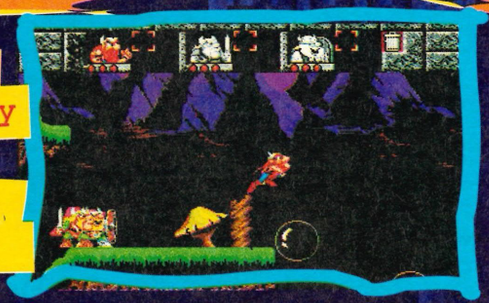



MEGA
machines


WOT HAVE WE EAR?
PART ONE OF YOUR GIANT POSTER — BUT WHO COULD IT BE!?

The Lost Vikings

'Er, hello, Missing Persons department? Yeah, I've lost three of me mates. What do they look like? Um, tall, hairy… cow horns sticking out their hats…'



Er, all we can say for now is that this game's got three vikings in it and it's… Nope, can't say that either.



Imagine the scene: three Viking chums, invading countries, raping women and generally minding their own business. The next thing they know — *whammo!* Some sodding alien decides they'd make a great exhibit in his museum.



PUBLISHER	VIRGIN
PRICE	TBA
RELEASE DATE	FEBRUARY
SIZE	'S'MEG (Tee-hee)

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	LORRY-LOADS
LIVES	GET ONE, MAN!
CONTINUES	YOU BETCHA
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YUP
BATTERY BACK-UP	NOPE
SPECIALS	FACTORY-FITTED SUNROOF

Not surprisingly, Erik the Swift, Baleog the Berserker and Olaf the Stout aren't too chuffed about this. So after a couple of hours of barbaric laughter and popular invading songs, they begin their journey home to their wives and families. This is where you come in.

You control these three characters (one at a time), each possessing special skills. Using their attributes, the job in hand is to get the team safely home.

Obviously, it doesn't going end there. Levels are packed with nasties of all shapes and sizes. But your worst enemy of all is the clock.

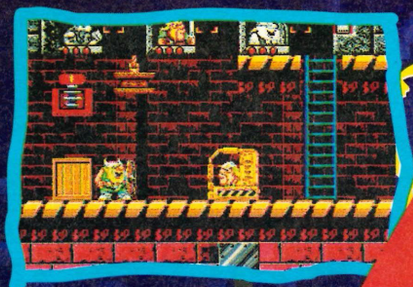
Uh-oh

Now you could be tricked into thinking this is a bit of a *Lemmings* clone. You know, the old scenario of teamwork to achieve freedom from obstacle-ridden hell. Well, you wouldn't be too far off the mark, but *The Lost Viking* is infinitely interesting and oodles more addic…

Hang on, the phone's ringing. Back in a sec…

…Erm, oops! Ahem, how can I say this, er… That was Virgin Games on the phone and, er, they said it's too early for a review and they'll take back all the freebies they've given us if we review it.

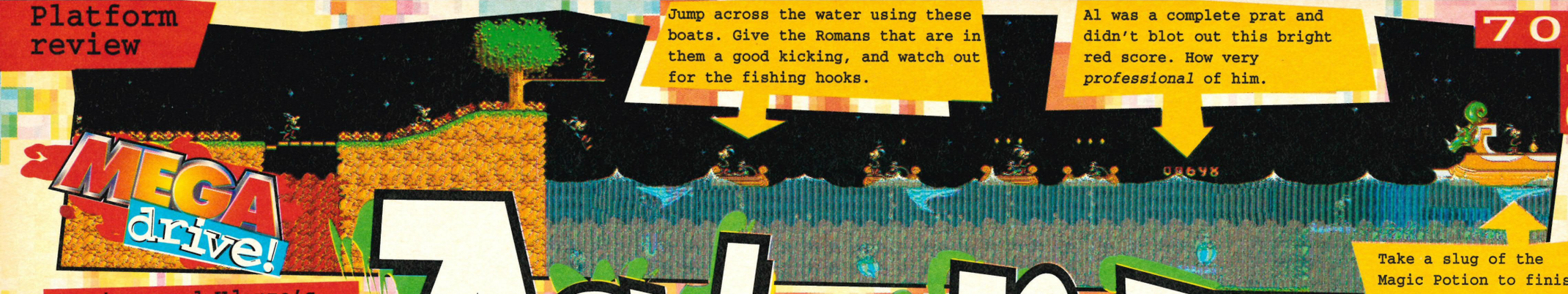
Well, that's blown that, hasn't it? You'll just have to drool over the screenshots until we're allowed to give *The Lost Vikings* a full review, hopefully in next month's issue. Apologies for any inconvenience caused, normal service will now resume…



You control these chaps one at a time to overcome the obstacles that stand between you and your family.







Jump across the water using these boats. Give the Romans that are in them a good kicking, and watch out for the fishing hooks.

Al was a complete prat and didn't blot out this bright red score. How very *professional* of him.

MEGA drive!

Asterix

Goscinny and Uderzo's phenomenally successful books have spawned several films and games on a number of console systems. The Mega Drive gets its first taste of the magic potion...

Take a slug of the Magic Potion to finish the level and move on.





The French are legendary for their crawling abilities. Take World War II, for example.



Asterix, oblivious of danger, debates whether or not to pick up the Magic Potion that'll restock his special weapons department.



Frenchmen on a rampage. A selection of bombs blow up certain obstacles and build limited platforms, enabling you reach previously unattainable heights, and in some cases fly over tougher sections.

Paf. Hmm. Have you ever been in a fight in the playground or the pub, or anywhere for that matter, clouted someone and heard a 'paf'-like sound? Probably not, but in *Asterix*, Roman soldiers are given a good paffing all over the shop.

Based on the feature-length cartoons ITV always seem to show on Bank Holiday Mondays (between a Disney film about raccoons and tractor racing), *Asterix* is — wait for it — a platformer.

You, as Asterix or his tub o' lard friend, Obelix, try to rescue the dodgily-titled village chemist, Getafix, who's been captured by the Romans. Without his pharmaceutical help, the Gauls stand little chance against the might of the Roman Empire and Asterix can't perform his party piece, which involves pulling a johnny over his head and inflating it with his nose. This is a bit of a downer, as you can imagine, so all roads (and platforms) lead to Rome...

Glug, glug, glug

The main novelty of *Asterix* is that you control either of two famous characters. Asterix is nimble and able to crawl into small tunnels, whereas Obelix is a fat turd who can punch a bit. You choose one of these Gauls at the beginning of the game and can toggle between them during most of the six levels, which contain nine sub-levels between them.

The levels contain nothing original to veterans of *Sonic* and the rest, apart from some tricky puzzle-solving, such as finding objects under certain bits of scenery.

There are a wide

////AL 53%////



First, a complaint. Why is it, whenever software houses get a licence for a film, book or TV show, or even a packet of biscuits, they turn the damn thing into a platformer? Why? Has there ever been a film where the protagonist spends all his

time jumping from one level to another?

For example, in *Jurassic Park*, did the Velociraptors kill their prey by bouncing around on people's heads? NO, THEY BLOODY DID NOT! They ripped the heads off the suckers and slashed open their abdomens! Software houses, listen up: forcing every licence into the same old format is not the way to be in the '90s, so just deal with it!

Anyhow, as a tribute to the central character, I'm going to use lots of asterisks in this review.

Asterix is ****! If one level's **** easy, the other one's too ******* hard! The sprites lumber along like Bernard Manning trying to pick up a copy of the ****** being blown along by the wind, and Asterix's punch manoeuvre looks like he's having trouble with a cheap disposable lighter he bought from Skegness market.

Sure, there are puzzles to solve, but they're all so ******* niggly, like spikes and falling blocks cunningly hidden among the mediocre backdrops so you notice them the next time you play — if you can be ******, that is. The only *real* challenge is to your tolerance.

Take it away from me!

range of power-ups, from health-restoring chalices and chickens to sickles which give limited invulnerability and potions which send the

The different stages have to be completed within a time level which, coupled with the fact you have a limited amount of weaponry, lend *Asterix* a complex feel.

Hang on, here come the debt-collectors...



Gauls, like the French, enjoy their boules. But why Asterix is stopping for a game, who knows.



Back then, France was called Gaul, but had no airports.





PUBLISHER	SEGA
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	RIGHT NOW
SIZE	16 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	3
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	?
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO

SPECIALSA FINE BAND FROM THE '70s

Grabbed by Gaulies



BANG! Handy grenade-type potion.



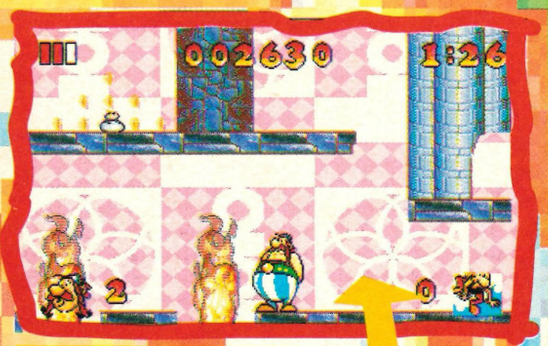
SHROING! Handy camo-type potion.



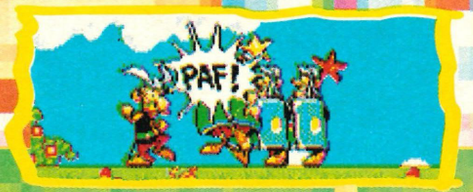
PUFF! Handy platform-type potion.



FLOAT! Handy flying-type potion.



That was me, Obelix, before I spent a week on the LardFast Diet. You have a nutritious shake for breakfast, 40 for...



///JAMES 65%///



I've got to admit, I've taken a peek at *Asterix* on *other* formats, so I didn't expect a whole lot from this. The *other* versions are slow and crap platformers that require little skill. *Asterix* on the Mega Drive, however, is a lot tougher. The tediously-slow platformer is still there but a couple of dollops of action and puzzling have been spooned in.

Asterix is for quick-thinkers. It has a strict time limit and sluggish main sprites — which drove me up the flippin' wall! I mean, if you're in a hurry to get somewhere or if you've sussed out how to complete a level, you want the sprite to make like a shepherd and get the flock out of there, not don a stupid grin and skip off at a teeth-grindingly slow pace.

None of us here reckon this game's finished, but Sega reckon it is and it's been reviewed elsewhere, so there isn't any excuse for shabby graphics, poor effects and tedious gameplay. It makes you wonder what Sega are playing at. You should be assured of a decent product if it comes from the head honchos themselves.

Quite frankly, I don't think the good points are enough to help *Asterix* out of its hole. It's not up to scratch and that's that!

GRAPHICS	72
SOUND	68
PLAYABILITY	64
LASTABILITY	62
ORIGINALITY	60
OVERALL	59

WWF ROYAL RUMBLE



PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	LATE NOV
SIZE	16 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	10
LIVES	1
CONTINUES	INFINITE
PASSWORD	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE

"C'mon, puffs! I'll tek all o' yerz..."



The Model: Look at this arrogant little git. Just asking for a good kicking.



The Undertaker: Yeah. I could have him an'all, no bother. And his mates.



Crush: What kind of poncy name's that? I don't like his face.



Hulk Hogan: Real name - Terry. Honest.Ha Ha ha Hah! Terry Hogan!



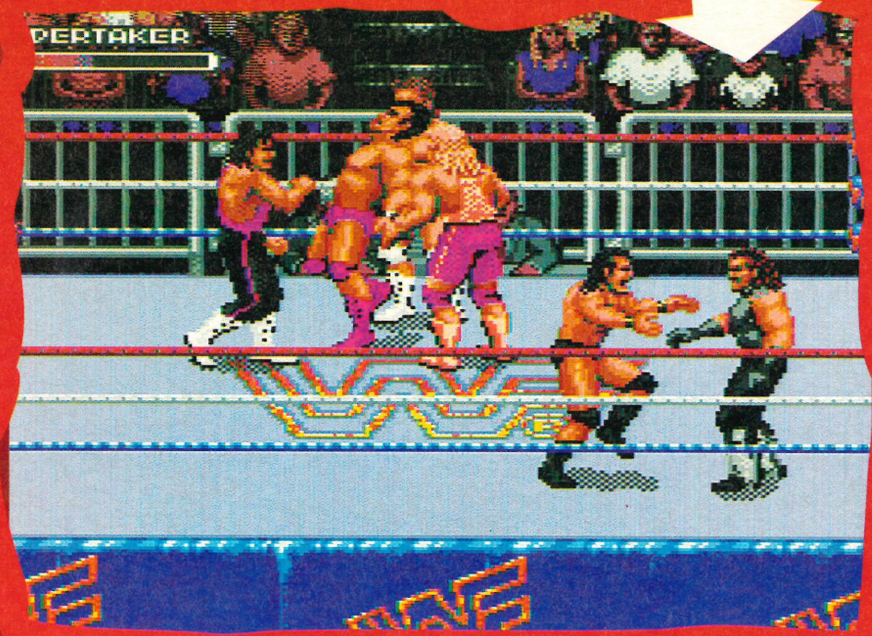
The IRS: What's that supposed to mean? I'm Ruddy Sh(Snip! - Ed)

Hard to believe, but Hulk Hogan, Randy Savage, The Ultimate Warrior et al are almost as popular as ever. The quality of WWF games hardly matters – they sell on the licence alone – but let's go another round for old times' sake, eh?

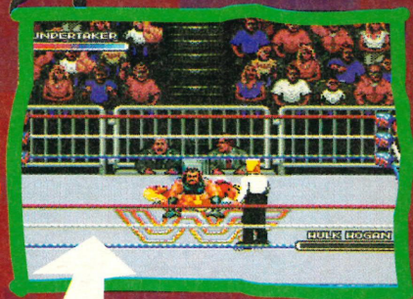
What an outrage! How could they do it? The World Wildlife Fund, a respectible bastion of animal protection for so long, have brought out a fighting game! What'll be in it, for Pete's sake? Pandas ripping the hearts out of chipmunks? Koala bears pulling an elephant's head off and waving it triumphantly in the air? Outrageous! Lobby your MP! Demonstrate outside Parliament! Boycott *Animal Magic*!

What? World *Wrestling Federation*? You jest! No pandas? No elephant spines jiggled about? Oh. Better start again...

Oh-ho! Fooled you there, folks, ha ha. Erm, yes. *WWF Royal Rumble* involves Hulk Hogan and his chums in a bit of grip-and-grapple-related tomfoolery. There are 12 differ-



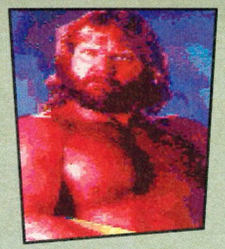
The school disco was in full swing. Everyone wore their best tights & pants.



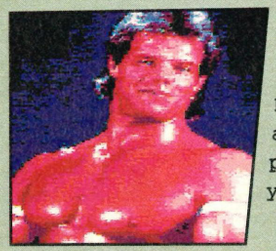
"What do you think of me Hulk, Y'know...as a person?
"I've always fancied you, Undertaker."



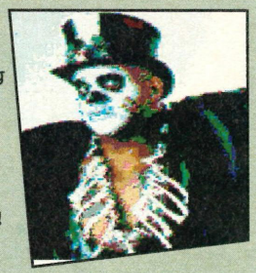
"Hulk wins the box of Smarties for being the best dancer!" Said Sir. Huzzah!



Hacksaw Jim Duggan: God, he gets on my wick. Says 'U.S.A!' a lot. Worra stoopid prat, I ask ya...



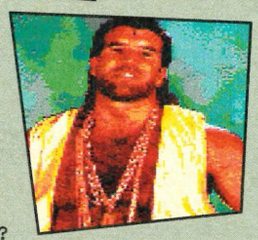
The Narciss-ist: He's another poncy yank.



Papa Shango: You wearing make-up? And jewellery? Cor... er, I mean, ik!



Randy Savage: If he came in our pub dressed like that he'd blah blah blah..



Razor Ramon: He thinks he's *rock*. I say he's a wally. Who do *you* agree with?



Shawn Michaels: Nice black wristband, mate - *I don't reckon!* Tee hee!

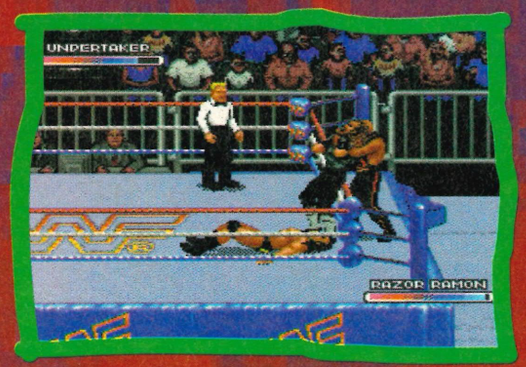
ent wrestlers and a vast array of options to choose from, including the aforementioned Royal Rumble, one-on-one, tag team and triple tag team matches.

Ringside beat-'em-up

A Royal Rumble has nothing to do with rolling Sarah Ferguson down a hill (unfortunately), but is instead a King of the Ring-style wrestlefest involving all 12 wrestlers! It's a chaotic sight to behold, where participants are eliminated by being pinned to the mat or tossed over the ropes, just like your dad used to throw you onto the sofa when he'd had a few. Ah, happy days...

Wrestlers have limited enegy and an array of standard moves, plus their authentic special manoeuvres, like The Undertaker's 'Tombstone'. The trimmings are there, too, such as ropes to bounce from and chairs to bend over heads — all the home comforts of the modern wrestler!







////JAMES 55%///////



I've never found the thought of a bunch of overgrown kids in glittering swimwear, running around to a plot more obvious than a bad cartoon, very appealing. And I'm very surprised that this whole WWF thang has lasted so long.

Putting that aside, if there was a decent cart beneath this run, hit, and grunt malarky, I'd welcome it into my Mega Drive with open dust doors. The thing is, *Royal Rumble*'s skill requirements fall second place to the need for an incredibly durable set of fingers. Button-bashing is the name of the game and the advantage goes to the chap with the turbo-fire joypad.

To a non-WWF fan, it's a huge waste of money. For example, you wouldn't buy a WWF sticker album unless you're heavily into the sport.

The licence could be forgiven if the game was more interesting, but matches can be fought using one or two buttons and non-WWF freaks will have no interest in the time-consuming, hard-to-remember special moves.

If there's any long term enjoyment to get out of *Royal Rumble*, I'm a small piece of broccoli.

///AL 58%///



I dunno. Wrestling matchs — and WWF bouts in particular — are such a laugh on the telly, but lose something when coverted into video games. And I'm not just talking about the Mega Drive, either — have you seen *European Rampage* on the Amiga? Nasty!

Let me at least reassure you that yes, *Royal Rumble* is better than *Wrestlemania*, by dint of the larger range of options and moves, but there's something missing. By just concentrating on the fighting element which, as we all know, isn't half as amusing as all the hype that surrounds it, the whole shebang's reduced to a substandard beat-'em-up.

One day, God willing, someone will bring out a WWF game which draws on the whole experience. Maybe a management sim, RPG or something in which the victor isn't necessarily the one who presses a button the fastest. Until that day, I offer the usual advice: Try before you buy.

GRAPHICS	69
SOUND	70
PLAYABILITY	65
LASTABILITY	57
ORIGINALITY	51
OVERALL	58

ment Fighters



Those heroes in a half-shell, the Teenage Mutant Ninja/ Hero/ Whatever Turtles, are back in another console romp! You may just recognise the game concept...

Once again, the evil Krang's playing up. He's kidnapped the mutant heroes' mentor, Splinter, by cunningly cloning Turtles and luring the All-Knowing One into a trap. (Yeah, but if he's that good, why didn't he notice these Turtles were blue and had gruff voices, eh?)

You don't think the Turtles are gonna stand for that, do you? No way, dude! (as they would annoyingly say). They're gonna get the posse together, hitch a ride to Krang's base in Dimension X and give him a good seeing-to.

We're in Beat-'em-upville with this game, folks, and no mistake. There are eight characters to choose from, each with their own special moves and ninja weaponry, such as Donatello's staff and Michaelangelo's nunchukas. To be honest, it's no different from *SF II* and *Mortal Kombat*, with a few interesting additions.

Your round

Firstly, the options screen offers a choice of rounds: one, the standard three, five or even seven. This allows longer battles and should eliminate any arguments over who's the better fighter — no more 'lucky' rounds!

Secondly, Konami put the much-maligned [C] button into use by introducing a 'taunt' option, which allows you to bait your opponent when he's sprawled on the floor. Or the two combatants can spend the allotted time just threatening each other, like they do in pubs and football terraces across the land.

Another interesting addition is the fully controllable Instant Replay,

TMNT: Tourna

//NICK///
/63%/



Imagine Jeremy Beadle, Cilla Black, Sharon out of *Birds of a Feather* and Floella Benjamin in a beat-'em-up and you get an idea of the enthusiasm I had for reviewing *TMNT: Tournament Fighters*. And, having played it thoroughly, I've discovered loads of other reasons why this game gets on my wick.

The main one is that it's so limited. Even before I'd learnt Donatello's special moves, I could beat everyone in the office by just crouching and stabbing them with my stick. I got a fair way into the tournament before I had to find other tactics.

One of *Tournament Fighters*' most annoying 'features' is that, special moves aside, there are only two moves: punch/use weapon and kick. When you use the [C] button, all that happens is your character stands still (and vulnerable) and shouts taunts such as 'Come on and fight' — hardly an energy bar-wearing tactic and intensely boring after the initial novelty.

Although other moves do happen, like Donatello throwing opponents from the end of his staff, they seem to happen when the cart decides it would be a good time for some variation.

If you've got a life, the only way this cart could come into your possession is if some well meaning but misguided relative gets it for you because 'That *Street Sweeper III* game you asked for looked so violent, and you *did* so like the Turtles last year.' If this happens to you, just wire your gift to them with a little Semtex.

GRAPHICS	77
SOUND	75
PLAYABILITY	79
LASTABILITY	73
ORIGINALITY	57
OVERALL	69











PUBLISHER	KONAMI
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	NOVEMBER
SIZE	8 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	8
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	1-7
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE



which rubs it in just that little bit more...

However, the Turtles aren't exactly the hip daddios they once were and beat-'em-up afficionados are lavishly catered for, so the question is: is it worth shelling out for?

////AL///
/75%//



This game can be summed up in three words: 'beat', 'em' and 'up'. That's all there is to say. However, I like the sound of my own voice and it's a novelty to see my musings in print, so excuse me while I dribble on for a bit.

Yes, each character has his own 'special moves'. One throws a fireball of sorts. One has a hundred-hand slap thing. One does a electrified flying headbutt across the screen. And so on.

There are different locations. There's the token woman. There is the token, er, *thing* who can electrify himself. And so on.

It's a shame for Konami that they released *Tournament Fighters* when they did, because another fist fest is what we don't need. At least we can be thankful it wasn't another platformer, eh folks?

Major flaws are that you have to fiddle like Nigel Kennedy to pull the special moves off and the play area's too damn small! If you're a coward like Nick, you pick Donatello, pin the other bloke in the corner and jab him into submission, which isn't very British.

However, putting the lack of originality aside, *Tournament Fighters* has the odd feature, such as the Instant Replay, 'taunt' button (which winds up folk summat chronic) and excellent options screen, which elevates it into the bracket of 'worth a look'. But then again, why have cotton when you can have silk?

WORK YOURSELF INTO A LEATHER!



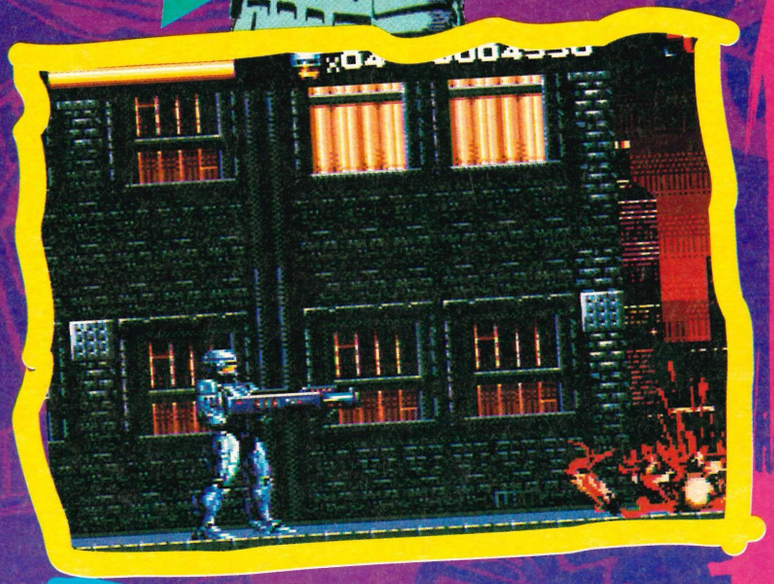
Loadsa Great stuff must be won

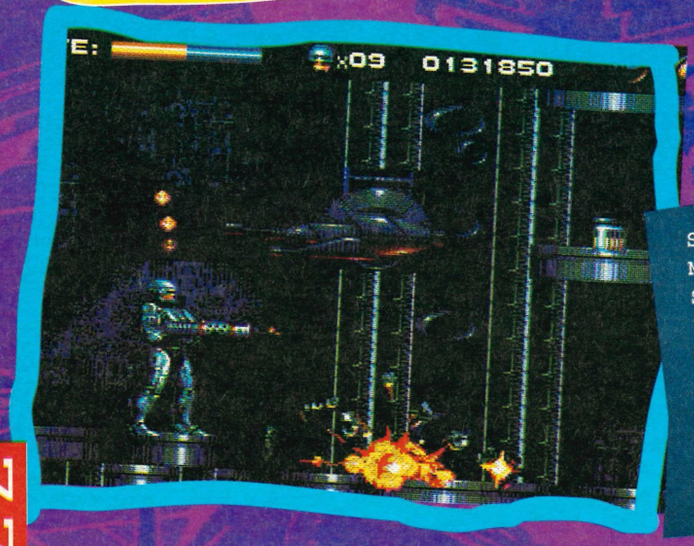
Ooh, the feel of leather against taut flesh... Oh, sorry, didn't see you there! You just caught the MEGA MACHINES massive admiring this extremely tasty leather jacket specially commissioned to celebrate the release of Virgin Games' deathfest, *Robocop Vs The Terminator*. This fine biking related garment is worth £300 (if it were for sale, which it isn't - yep, it's a limited edition), and is embossed with the logo of that fine game, rated a trouser-bulging 84% in the very issue of MEGA MACHINES you clasp in your sweaty palms. And those trousers will bulge even more when we tell you it could be YOURS!

Yes, one lucky reader will have the pick of the chicks as he takes on the mantle of Leather-Clad Sex God. Not only that, but we're also throwing in a Robocop Vs Terminator pin badge and T-shirt, and when all that female attention gets just too much, you can chill with the copy of the cart we're also giving away. Not bad, eh? Ten runners-up will recieve a T-shirt, badge and copy of the game. But you've gotta be in it to win it!



Competition





Just answer these simple questions;

1) Which of these is *not* an Arnold Swarzenegger cliche?

a) 'I'll be back!'
b) 'Hasta La Vista, Baby!'
c) 'Do you want Hob Nobs or Boasters with your tea, Uncle Clive?'

2) Which Coronation Street bubble-permed love machine had a bit part in Robocop II?

a) Brian Tilsley
b) Percy Sugden
c) Ken Barlow

3) Which of these games has been released by Virgin?

a) Cold Sore
b) Cool Spot
c) Heat Rash

Send in those entries to: Rob Vs Term Compo, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW. Closing date December 12th. Employees of Impact Magazines, Virgin Games and Arnold Schwartzenegger can just forget about entering, alright? The Editor's decision is final. And Wham's last album was called 'The Final' as well. spooky, eh? Now, let's have another go with the jacket, James. James? Aw, nooo! Go and get a cloth, man...



THE ANSWERS!

Rob Vs Term Compo

1 a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

2 a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

3 a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

Name .....
Address .....
.....
.....
.....
Postcode .....

The ULTIMATE Challenge

OH, DO BE SENSIBLE!!!

Take four nervous journalists, one delightful PR person, one talented games programmer and 30 noisy, hyped-up schoolchildren and what have you got? The first MEGA MACHINES Ultimate Challenge, that's what! A morning at Ludlow School playing Sony's *Sensible Soccer* against a group of young un's? Easy! After all, us folk play console games for a living. We'll thrash 'em, no sweat. In-game commentary by ADRIAN 'They whupped his ass' PITT…

'Give me 110%. I want 110%. This ain't gonna be easy. It's a tricky manoeuvre, but you can do it. It's tough out there, but I *know* you can do it.'

'Okay, James, give it a rest. I've been a driver for nearly two years now, Lord knows I'm quite capable of reversing my car out of the car park!' See, the jitters had set in and we hadn't even arrived at Ludlow school!

This *Sensible Soccer* challenge wasn't *our* idea — heavens to Betsy, no. **Caroline Stokes**, top PR bod at **Sony** had thrown down the sweaty lettuce.

'Let's get you guys on MEGA MACHINES playing *Sensi* against a gang of local schoolchildren,' she cried. Errrr… yes Caroline, luvverly idea, but can't we just dress up in footy kits, go for a kick-about in the park and suck oranges to promote your game?



John Hare, the guy responsible for the graphics in *Sensible Soccer*, forces his most cheerful grin as he congratulates Charlie Francis on the draw. But what is he thinking…?

Jon's no tyrant and before we started whittling down the throng of 30 bods to just four, he allowed the odd few, us guys included, to take part in a couple of warm-up sessions.

Score draws

The atmosphere was electric as our first contender, **Charlie Francis**, took his seat and prepared to take on **Jon Hare**. 'It's got to be Norwich for me,' shouted Jon, 'I'm *always* Norwich.'

pretty gruelling match.

'I'm Moscow and he's Glasgow,' crowed **Gareth Hughes**, Mr Needham's opponent.

'What team formations have you gone for?' I enquired, trying to sound as though I knew what I was talking about! 'We've both gone for attack,' chipped in Gareth. 'I'm gonna kick his butt!'

And it certainly seemed that way as, in the first minute, Gareth scored his first goal. Al went white. Oh heck! A whiter shade of pale close to



at the front prepare for the Sensible Cup.

Sensible Soccer started life on the Amiga just over two years ago. Jon and his partner at **Sensible Software**, **Chris Yates**, came up with the idea.

Jon had tried *Kick Off* and wanted a game with improved play and loads of new features. *Their* footy sim would be instinctive — you *had*

Oh, the shame!

I gleaned as much info from Jon as I could but wasn't sure my new-found knowledge would serve me well. No time for doubts — I'd been summoned.

My opponent was 16-year-old



Too late. Before we could mutter, 'Mam! Can I have hair extensions like Paul Gascoigne's?' we were parked outside the aforementioned learning establishment with a Mega Drive, a glut of Sony T-shirts, those all-important *Sensible Soccer* game chips and the odd half-hearted grin.

No turning back, folks. No second thoughts, chaps. We were here! Who knows what'll greet us when we step inside…

The roar of the crowd

I don't know about the others, but I felt a bit like a pop star when we strolled into the classroom. Cheers galore and a plethora of expectant faces.

We set up the Mega Drive and introduced one of the programmers of *Sensible Soccer*, **Jon Hare**. Jon explained the rules, which didn't take long as many of our budding Dave Platt's had played the Amiga version.

The quest was on to find the *Sensible Soccer* champ. Caroline was waving *Last Action Hero* and *Dracula* CD soundtracks in the air — the winner of the Sensible Cup would claim these prizes.

I have never in my short yet colourful existence seen *so* many people want to play a console game. The lads (and one lass!) were falling over themselves to get their mitts on a Mega Drive joypad. Fortunately

The fact that this big bloke in the turquoise sweater was the game's programmer didn't bother young Charlie one iota. With his eyes fixed firmly on the screen, Mr Francis chose Inter Milan and whispered, 'I'm gonna thrash him!' The lads chose to play three minutes 'real time' each way.

During the match, I asked Hit Man Hare to talk us through his tactics. 'Playing dirty,' he smiled with the Devil's eyes, 'but beware, it's easy to get sent off.' Charlie took note.

The odd wicked tackle and a yellow card later, it was half-time and 2–1. Jon came back in the 57th minute with a smart diving header.

With just two minutes to go, Charlie's supporters were egging him on to score another, but it wasn't to be. At the end of 90 minutes, the score was Norwich 2, Inter Milan 2. What better way to end the first game?

After the match, I asked Charlie what he thought of *Sensible Soccer*. 'It's pretty good. It was a touch confusing for me, because I'm used to playing the Amiga version, with just one button on the joystick. As a Mega Drive game, though, it's excellent. If I were reviewing it, I'd give it over 90%.'

He's over the moon, Saint!

Gutsy Gareth

I fought through the throng to find Crazy Nut Needham, our man *Al*, at the start of what appeared to be a half-time as young Mr Hughes scored his second, courtesy of Moscow's star player, Redchenko.

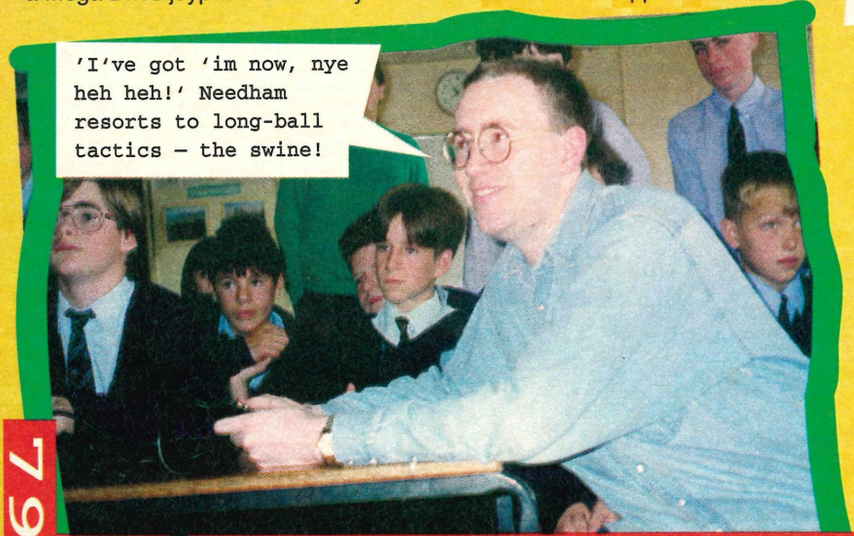
In the 47th minute, Needham was fighting back, a cracking goal by Glasgow from the six-yard box . Sadly, Gareth's cockiness *may* have cost him the match.

In the 55th minute, Moscow netted an own-goal. Glasgow played on this lapse in concentration and, in the 62nd minute it was 3–2 to Al. At the end of 90 minutes, our man with the round glasses had definitely *not* made a spectacle of himself.

Funny, I've a feeling that's not the last we'll hear of the cock-sure Gareth Hughes…



Gareth Hughes gets in touch with his most inner emotions as Al celebrates his victory.



A Sensible idea

Not even the roar of the crowd could drown out **Mr Weaver**'s voice. Mr Weaver is one of the senior house tutors at Ludlow School. Naughty little Caroline Stokes had been running in the corridor, wasn't wearing school uniform and had make-up on. Shame!

'I haven't been told off in years,' she whimpered, and was made to stand in the corner and stop bullying the MEGA MACHINES crew into giving *Sensible Soccer* a 98% rating.

I noticed Jon with a group of enthusiastic Sega gamers, talking tactics. Time for an ear-wig, methinks — pick up a few pointers while our team to want to pick up the game, get into it straight away and, after several months play, still find new features and pick up new skills.

'We gave the game a delicately-balanced difficulty curve,' Chris Yates told me. 'The Amiga game took around eight months to program. I'd say the Sega game took about the same time.

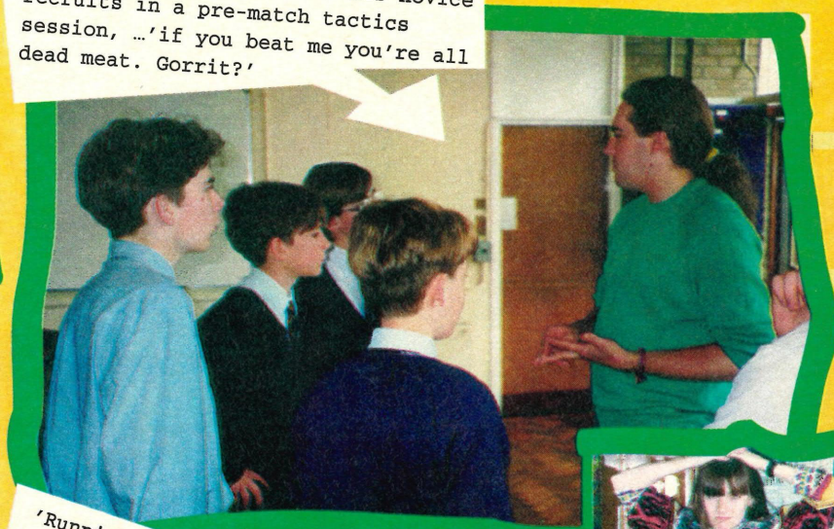
'For the Mega Drive version, we included difficulty levels, star players with their own special shots, we enhanced the goal keepers, made the menus less boring and changed the dimensions of the pitch a little. You get a smaller view of the pitch, so the game appears to run faster, but it's actually the same speed as the Amiga version.'

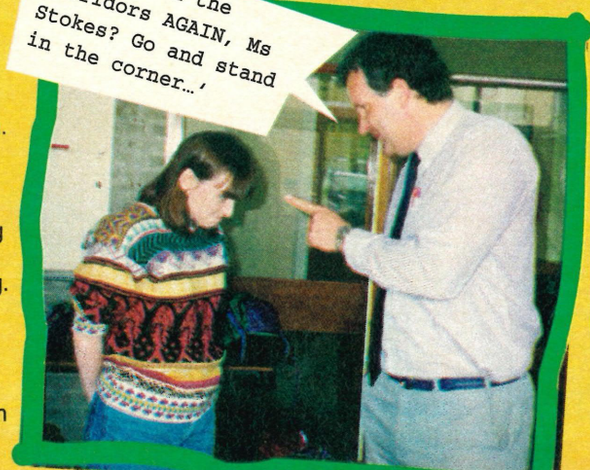


'You can NOT be serious!' Adrian shows off his tonsils as Gareth Jackson bangs in another one…

Gareth Jackson. I was Madrid, he was Ljubljana (don't ask!).

Now, looky here. I've never played the Amiga ▶▶▶









version of *Sensible Soccer*. The first time I'd seen the MD game was two weeks prior to the challenge. Nevertheless, when I played against my MEGA MACHINES colleagues, I was pretty damn good, let me tell you.

Here at Ludlow School, well… Let's just say my hamster died the day before — let's leave it at that, shall we? I wasn't concentrating that's *my* excuse!

A hefty crowd had gathered round the TV screen. The reason? I was being utterly, utterly thrashed. The cheers were deafening.

By the 78th minute, Gareth was beating me 8–0. By the 79th, the score was 9–0. By the 80th minute, Gareth was beating me 10–0!

Along with falling through Dudley bus shelter, this ranked as one of the most embarrassing moments of my life. I was desolate. Our on-the-spot reporter, Caroline Stokes, stormed to the front of the crowd like a German tourist in a queue for the toilets.

'How do you feel, Gareth?' enquired the **Sony** hack with a cheesy grin. 'I feel really good,' he said, glowing from top to toe, 'especially as this is only the second time I've played the game!' Yeah, go on, rub it in.

'What did you think of the game as a whole?' asked Stokesy. 'This is an



could hear a pin drop.

She gripped the joypad. A few excited whispers. She was going for it. Bodies moved nearer the screen. She made her run-up. We all held our breath.

She made contact — leather against leather. Fists rose in the air. Would she do it?

'YEEEEEEEAAAAAAAHHHHH!!' Errrr… I *think* she scored! Parma 4, Milan 0.

'Fantastic! Brilliant! I love it!' Ms Randle laughed. 'It's a good game. I like the moves; it's easy to control. I'd give it 95%. Any chance of a re-match?!'

Not just now, Sara, we've the quarter-finals to play.

And this, ladies and gentlemen, is how the scores looked before the big final…

SENSIBLE CUP QUARTER-FINALS

Ljubljana Gareth Jackson	4	vs	**Highbury** Robert Gissop	3
Marseille Shaun Johnston	3	vs	**Vienna** Dominic Giffard	0
Glasgow Gareth Hughes	4	vs	**Madrid** Steven Frost	0
Milan Charlie Francis	3	vs	**Manchester** Sara Randle	0

SENSIBLE CUP SEMI-FINALS

Glasgow Gareth Hughes	2	vs	**Marseille** Shaun Johnston	1
Milan Charlie Francis	3	vs	**Ljubljana** Gareth Jackson	0



A SNES owner, Sara didn't appear at all daunted when faced with a Mega Drive joypad. She chose Parma, James plumped for Milan. You could tell from Sara's expression and the way she played there was a lot a stake.

Her gritty determination far surpassed James' weak-willed whining. 'She's time-wasting!' he wailed as Sara made a substitution in the 84th minute. Not that she needed to — by this time she was winning 3–0.

In the 86th, James turned nasty. A



minutes into extra time, Mr Hughes' star player had proved his worth: Glasgow 2, Milan 1.

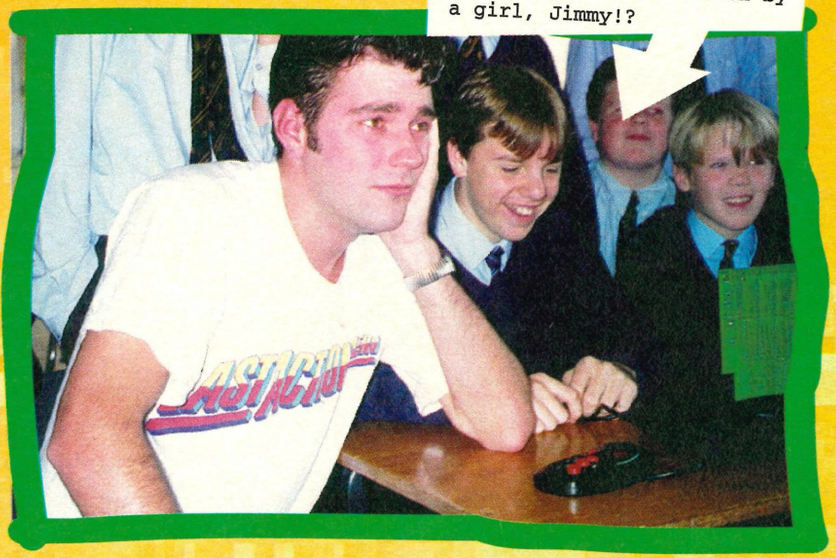
And that's the way it stayed. Chairs were scattered willy-nilly and elbows met eyeballs as Gareth rose triumphantly to claim his prize.

Any post-match comments, Mr Hughes? 'Errr… yeah! It's a great game. Very fast. The players move a hell of a lot quicker in this version. Can I have a T-shirt?'

As the crowd left for Home Economics and Woodwork, Jon

excellent version. The controls are really good. A brilliant game.'

'What review mark would you give it?' 'Oh, 96%, definitely.'



James pretends to look bored, but Sara isn't having any of it – so wossit like being beaten by a girl, Jimmy!?

Girls just wanna have fun

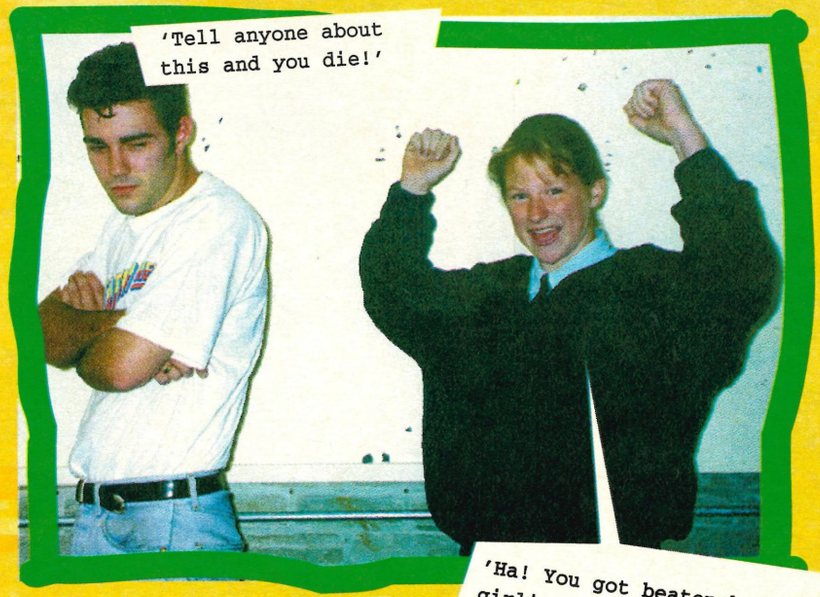
Just as we'd begun sorting out the men from the boys, up popped our only female gamer, 14-year-old **Sara Randle**. She'd been paired with MEGA MACHINES' very own Eric Cantona — **James 'Oooh! Aaah!' Beaven**.



Sara 'Show a bit of leg' Randle spent the entire match blowing kisses at James - which could be the reason for his pitiful 4-nil defeat.

wicked foul, there was no denying — we'd *all* seen it. So had the ref.

A penalty. The room went quiet. Sara thought things through. You



'Tell anyone about this and you die!'

'Ha! You got beaten by a girlie. You got beaten by a girlie. Ner-ni-ner-ni-ner-ner. I wear a skirt and everything, me, and I beat you!'



'Right then, you've had it.'

'Ya reckon, then, do ya?'

And so it came to pass (sorry, I've resorted to dreadful footballing puns!) that **Gareth Hughes** and **Charlie Francis** made it through to the *Sensible Soccer* final (told you we hadn't heard the last of Mr Hughes!).

The two glared at each other across the table and prepared for kick off. Gareth played Glasgow, Charlie was Milan.

Plenty of frantic button-pressing and nifty joypad moves, let me tell you. Charlie settled into the game far quicker than Gareth. Gritting his teeth, his star player blasted through Glasgow's defence and — this could be a goal.

Was it? Was it? 'YES!' With three minutes on the clock, 1–0 to Charlie.

Gareth retaliated. 'Ooooh!' He hit the post… and 'Oooh!' — he hit the post again!

His perseverance paid off, though. A great 25-yarder in the 40th minute. Half-time score — Glasgow 1, Milan 1.

Tension mounted. Charlie was perspiring; Gareth seemed cool, calm and neglected. The crowd, it seemed, were on Charlie's side!

The lad done good!

Fast-fingered Francis made his way down the left wing, a cross into the penalty area… a goal, surely? 'Aaaaaahhhh!' Gareth *just* managed to save it.

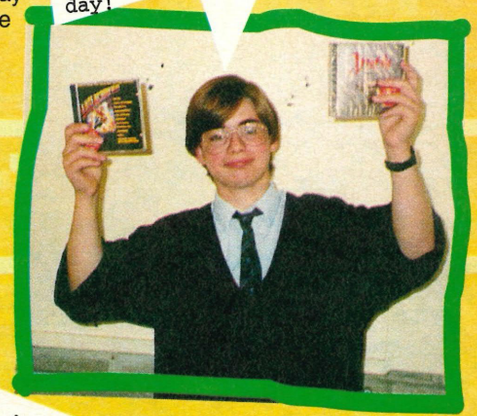
With 20 minutes remaining, it was still Glasgow 1, Milan 1. Charlie could've made it 2–1, but hit the post. With only three minutes to go, he hit the post again! Would it go to extra time? Yes indeedy!

The guys were worried. Charlie was going all-out to score another but Gareth looked the better man now. Call me psychic. Five signed autographs, James argued with Sara, Nick and Al looked like they were selling dodgy Rave tickets, and me… it was time to book myself into the Sunny Valley Twilight Home.

Beaten 10–0! Can you believe it?



Hurrah! I Gareth Hughes am victorious - and my fringe hasn't moved once throughout the day!



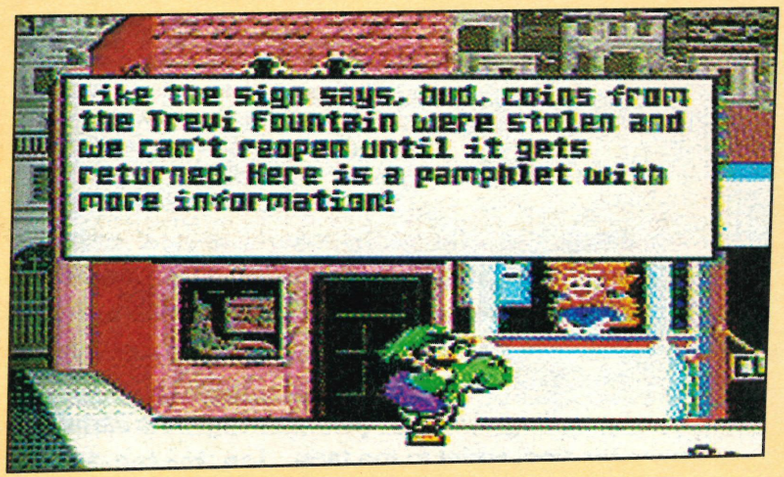


'Phew! Who dropped one?'

MEGA HITS*

The fact you're reading MEGA MACHINES proves you're a person of discerning taste; others aren't so lucky. Those stupid enough not to own a Mega Drive have to put up with 'hits' like these...

* Anagram



Mario Is Missing SNES

The Mega Drive's answer to 'Edutainment' — games which present education in an entertaining manner — is the excellent *Carmen Sandiego* series. The SNES boffins, however, chose to lock that irritating

The thing is, it's geared toward folk aged four and up. What four-year-old's gonna wade through heaps of craggy old waffle 'bout some crumbly old building in a country they've probably never

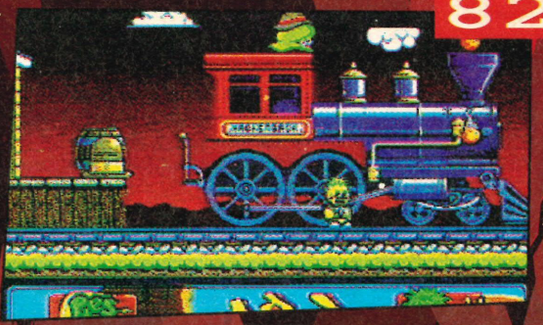
Super Sports Challenge.....Amiga

Now, what's it to be? Your fingernails slowly pulled out, or perhaps you'd prefer to walk on a bed of nails while carrying heavy shopping? Or worst of all, you could play *Super Sports Challenge*. This duff sports sim seemed better when it was released under a different name years ago.

Compete in a succession of events, starting with the mighty 100 metres, in which you waggle the joystick like hell for even a slim chance of a good position. Most of the other events involve pulling the joystick to the right and pressing the fire button.

With three disks to swap, life gets very bland, but disk-changing's still one of the better events. Speedy animation, realistic graphics and near-perfect gameplay — *Super Sports Challenge* has none of these.

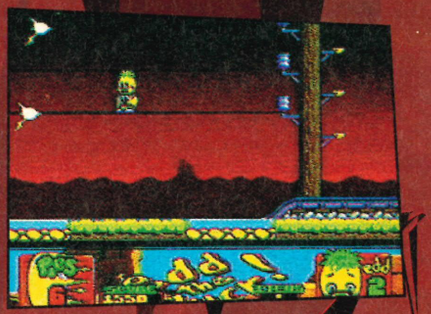
NICK

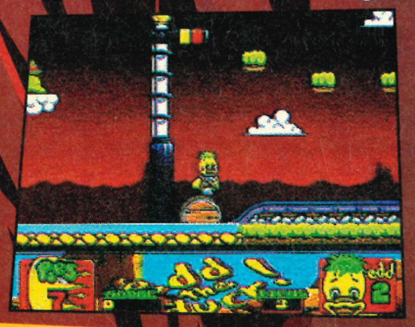


Edd the Duck 2... Amiga

The second game starring the ridiculous duck puppet is set in the Wild West, where Edd throws custard pies at the no-good varmints of Dodge City. Guide the fluffy pile of rags through a variety of bland levels and pit you wits against rolling barrels, jumping fish... and that's about it.

Edd the Duck may be one of the most a popular puppets on TV, but his game isn't a winner. Controlling





the daft sprite around equally stupid backdrops made me nauseous. I couldn't play for long without falling off my chair with premature tiredness.

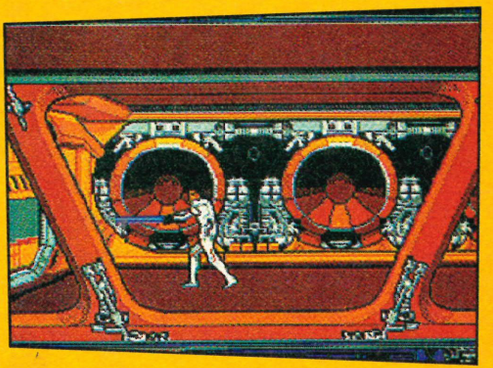
Graphically, *Edd 2*'s a joke. Everything's *so* two-dimensional and drab. The main sprite looks like Edd, but what use is that when the gameplay's rubbish? The music's typical of cutesy games: a simple, grating melody repeated over and over and *over* again.

I hate that duck!

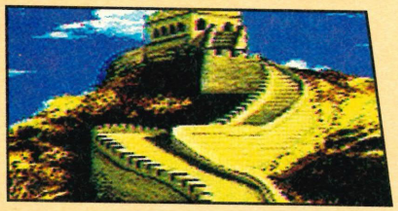
NICK

Starblade.....Amiga

It's the year 3001 and the majority of the planet's inhabitants have been forced to live in small colonies by Cephalhydra insectoids. The only hope the repressed humans have of stopping the nasties is to retrieve data some dead bloke has stupidly scattered around a few planets. When this info's recovered, it will reveal the secret location of Genolyn, the Cephalhydra Queen, and



Italian plumber in a big castle and get his brother, Luigi, to race around the globe as part of a rescue bid. The Great Wall of China, Sistine Chapel, Trevi Fountain and other famous monuments make an appearance, along with the ever so popular Mario and friends.

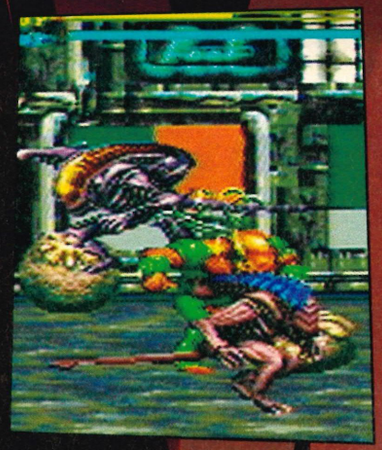


heard of?

After the Mario appeal's worn off, the game amounts to a lot of plodding around, using the same tactics to reap measly rewards. Kids won't stick with something so repetitive, and only masochistic parents will make their loved ones sit in front of a screen and attempt to fathom out what's happening.

Mario and Luigi should stick to leaping pipes and riding weird reptiles. SNES owners with brains will find their heads throbbing ten to the dozen when they play this.

ADE





vengeance can be delivered.

Starblade has a thick manual you're supposed to memorise before even attempting to get into this game; equivalent to sleeping gas. Unfortunately, this snoozesome book leads to a game where you stand at the bridge of a spaceship, pressing buttons.

Gameplay is perhaps the most tedious of this month's **Mega Hits*** and the story's a rehash of those terrible sci-fi B-movies. *Starblade*'s so banal, you wouldn't play longer than a minute.

ALAN









Eye of the Beholder III.....PC

Errr… surprisingly, this is the third game in the *Beholder* series. The other two games were cracking adventures — battling to regain the city of Waterdeep and free the temple of Darkmoon was brilliant.

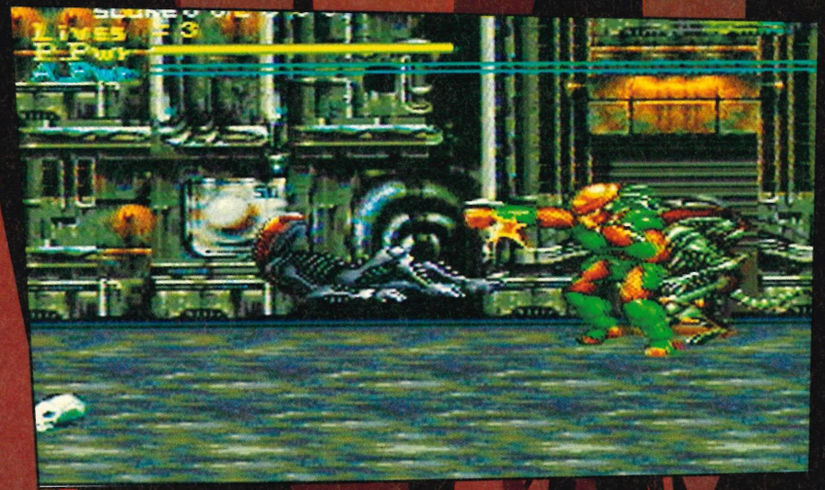
This time the task's to travel to the ruined city of Myth Drannor and confront evil bast Acwellan with your hefty artifact. Well, imagine you're going to Coventry for the first time, alight from the bus, walk around for a few hours, get totally lost, bored and start crying. A similar scenario to playing *Eye of the Beholder III*, I reckon.

The game's massive, but plodding around for hours without a clue what's going on is par for the course. Level 1's a huge expanse. Hack down the odd tree or ten and molest a couple of witless spooks. Oh, a minotaur appears from time to time, but he doesn't come from Yorkshire, isn't wearing long-johns or holding a lavatory brush, so fails to raise excitement.

There's a forest to trundle through next. Burning trees down is hardly ecological and mapping the city (Level 3) is a waste of paper — another huge area with little going on.

Eye of the Beholder III has too much waffle and not enough to see and do. Mega Drive RPGs are a Godsend compared to this (that's *really* saying something! —Ed).

ADE





Aliens vs Predator.....SNES

While cruising the space lanes of 2493, looking for a human to maim in the name of sport, a Predator crashed on a funny-looking planet by the name of Vega IV. The worst thing about it is the fact it's choc-a-block with the dreaded stomach-popping Aliens. And the fun begins — or so you'd think.

To fight his way through a barrage of Aliens, the Predator has a few weak punches and kicks. He can also pick up items like javelins and throwing discs, which prove extremely effective… in sports games. Repeat the restrictive moves through seven levels and the Predator's victorious.

Aliens vs Predator should come with a warning: if you blink too many times, you may miss the gameplay completely. Fans of the movies will be extremely disappointed with this load of tripe. Two of the most feared and powerful monsters behave like nothing more than wet fish.

ALAN



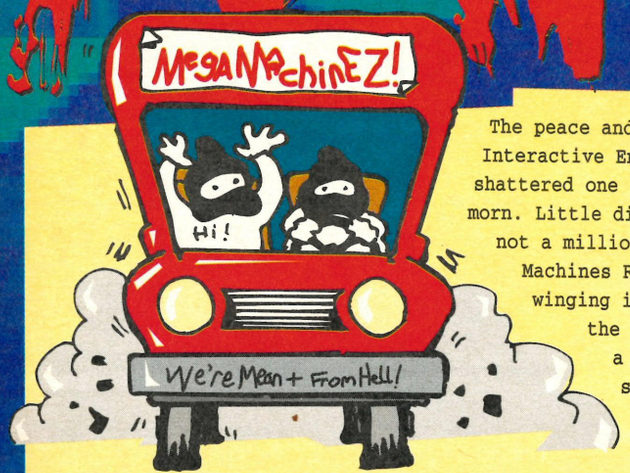
That's all the Mega Hits* we have room for this issue: weren't they great? More crappy releases get the Michael extracted next month so, until then, don't touch that pile!

RAM RAID

VIRGIN ON THE DESPICABLE!

84

84



The peace and quiet of the Virgin Interactive Entertainment offices was shattered one cold and frosty Tuesday morn. Little did the Virgins know that not a million miles away, the Mega Machines Ram Raid-mobile was winging its way to their part of the sprawling Metropolis on a mission that would strike fear into the hearts of men, women and Leo Sayer look-a-likes for a fortnight at least. The Ram Raiders quest to find Top Secret information hidden in the Virgin lair would not be an easy one. Would the PR bods spill the beans? Would the Marketing folk spill the beer? Would Dominic Diamond appear and spill his guts? Well…errrr…you won't find the answers to any of these questions here, so we suggest you stop being so nosey and read on. [Balaclavas supplied by 'Balaclavas 'R' Us' – for all your balaclavaring needs].

Starring in…

The Raiders are hungry for games…



7

Tell us where the games are and we'll buy ya a nicer cardigan with this 'ere dosh.

Don't rough her up too much, Al. I hear she makes a cracking rhubarb crumble.

Over the other side of the office…

8



SHRI

One cold and frosty Tuesday morn. Mild-mannered Sean Brennan, Virgin's Sales and Marketing Director is out of his office on a photo shoot for Kay's catalogue.

4



The Ram Raid began…



1

Phew! Thank Heavens I remembered to bring along my Top Secret documents. We wouldn't want them getting into the wrong hands now, would we?

Make love to the camera, darling. Give me butch, lovey. I want butch. Just a bit more to the left, sweetie. Could you just climb over the railings, Seany-warny?

Suit: £599.99 (any shade of black)
Polo neck: £899.99 (one size fits all)
Shoes: £3,999.99 (authentic cockroach skin)

2

Ah! It's good to know I can leave my office once in a while, rest assured that my staff are all safe and sound and busy about their daily chores...

Little did Sean know...

3

That wasn't a taxi driver, ya great pillock! That was Jasper Conran!

D'ya think we've been rumbled, Al? That taxi driver looked mighty suspicious when I told him we were modelling these balaclavas for Jasper Conran.

Flip me, Ade! You get bloomin' long spaghetti here in London.

Stupid idea...blah! blah!...smelly git...blah! blah!...thinks he's 'ard...blah!... blah!

Twenty-five minutes later...

5

Oh, come here, ya great tray cloth! Me and my magic spaghetti will save the day.

The reception...

Burp! Parp! Ooops! If only I hadn't had that mulligatawny soup for breakfast.

I'll take that, thank you, young woman.

6

Is that 'Aspects of Love' she's humming, Al?

Hmmmm...hmmmm...hum...hmmmmm...hum...

EK!

These guys mean business, Helen. Give them the money and tell them where Sean's office is.

In Sean's office...

9

Hmmmm...this could be important. What's it say? 'To see Crete'. Doh! It's a flippin' holiday brochure.

Hmmmm...the one on the left's fairly cute. I've a fetish for men in navy blue, bri-nylon head gear.

TOP SECRET



But it wasn't a holiday brochure at all! It was a Top Secret file containing a selection of up-and-coming Virgin games. Al and Ade were in awe, (that's a little mining village, just left of Swansea!). They didn't notice, the cool, calm, collected Sean Brennan enter his office. Sean made a grab for the file. Not quick enough! The quick-witted duo had plans for the man in the plum-coloured polo neck, [also available in mint, turquoise, bandage, sprout and other God damn awful colours].

Seconds later...

10

We've seen the games, Brennan and we're not happy. Mr Blobby Goes To Ipswich, Colin the Daschund and his Amazing Inflatable Sausage Machine, Bucks Fizz: Make My Video. Call yourselves a software house?

No, actually I call myself a white male, early thirties, medium build, dark hair, dark eyes. This is a thought bubble, rather than a speech bubble, folks. The reason for that I think is blatantly obvious.

11

Little does he know that beer is laced with poison, set to cause agonising death in minutes!

Little does he know, this beer is laced with poison, set to cause agonising death in minutes! Eh? Hang on! What am I saying? Aaarrrgggh!

Having survived the poison ordeal, you know, the one set to cause agonising death in minutes, Al attempts to kidnap a Wet Wet Wet fan in return for info on where the games are stashed...

14

Doh! My plans are foiled again by a box of incredibly nutritious breakfast cereal. I can't tear myself away from these.

'Sweet little mystery...lah...lah...lah'

On the top floor of the Virgin building, Managing Director, Mr C. Spot is totally oblivious to what's going on downstairs.

15

Ho-hum! That's enough for today. Another multi-million pound deal signed, sealed and delivered. I never knew there were so many different sorts of chocolate misshapes. Time for a sit down, methinks...

16

Dog food...wall-mounted brillo grip...Pampers...bin liners. Damn! I haven't enough for a separate softner and fabric conditioner.

19

Enough of your cheek, you young whipper-snapper! Put those games in my amazingly authentic swag bag, or someone gets hurt.

20

No! I won't give you Cool Spot, that excellent platform adventure from Virgin. That's Cool Spot on Mega Drive, Master System and Game Gear. How was that? A big enough plug d'ya reckon?!

What game did you say? Cool Spot that delightful, action romp from Virgin? Oh heck! You've got me at it now. Suffer you bitch!

21

With the guard defeated, Al sets about nabbing stuff off the shelves...

22

Meanwhile downstairs, Ade does the dirty on one of Virgin's European Sales Executives, Greg Baverstock...

12

Hello? Hello? Greg? Are you there? Was it the beige wallpaper we plumped for, or the light green with diagonal stripes? Greg? Are you listening to me?

Chicken in a basket, anybody?

Ah! Nice and relaxing. Now, wouldn't it be funny if a nasty terrorist-type person in a navy blue balaclava stormed my office and spoilt the ambience? Ha! Ha! Not that that's EVER going to happen, mind...

23

Geez, Ade! I got a copy of Speedball 2. Ahem! Is it my imagination, or has Ade not appeared in many of these shots?

Little did Al know, Ade had fled with Virgin's top PR bod, Danielle 'Woody' Woodyatt and £198.56p from petty cash. They're now living in sin just outside Nantwich.

24

Right – I'm off!

Just then...

17

Tell us where the games are, red boy, or I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll...errrr...sorry – wrong story!

Me and my big spotty mouth!

In the car park...

25

Hurrah! This looks like a suitable automobile in which to make my getaway. Thank goodness I got all this booty without someone stopping me. Eh? What was that noise?

13

Back upstairs, PR Executive, Doug Johns refuses to spill the beans on forthcoming Mega-CD games from Virgin.

If you think tying me up with strawberry liquorice shoelaces is going to stop me – think again. I've got the antidote for the poison, you know, the one set to cause agonising death in minutes. Untie me, or your mate snuffs it.

The Ram Raiders eventually find the games store cupboard.

18

I recognise those fingers! Aren't you Bobby Crush, top 1970s piano impresario and suit wearer?

26

Strewth! It's Leo Sayer! He's my favourite pop singer of all time. Hey! Forget the games and a life on the Costa del Crime, folks – I wanna listen to Leo.

'You make me feel like dancin'...'

The whole point of dispatching our highly-trained Ram Raiding crew down to Virgin Games was so that they could find out what the company are up to. Screenshots of new games under development, top secret release schedules and other sensitive material was what we were after. And what did we get? A bagful of old releases and these photos. Ha! Next month's victims won't get away so lightly...

THE END!

The Write Brothers!

From page 64...

Wouldn't it be sound if you could pull Andy Crane's head off, or set fire to Ian Beale out of *Eastenders*?

Also, on bonus levels, you get to do ace things like smash your school up, and things like that. Also, if you've got a Menacer, you can shoot them as well! It'd be a good doss.

Who would you like to beat up in a Sega game?

Daz Clark, Basildon.

NICK: *What an excellent idea, Daz!*
NIGE: *Gleamin'!*
NICK: *Personally, I've always wanted to give a good kicking to the Chinese bloke who throttles that chicken in Chun Li's stage of* SF II. *It's disgusting. Heaven knows what he does to it when we're not there...*
NIGE: *If I want to beat someone up, I just do it. Don't need to play a video game.* Street Fighter II*? I've lived it, me.*

Failed in Wales...

Dear Nick and Nige
Hope you like this postcard. There's nothing tackier than a Welsh woman in her national costume, so I'm giving it to you for your office wall.
Russell Gifford, Powys



Nige: ***You're joking! I'd rather stick Nick to the wall!***
Nick: ***There's no need for violence, big brother! Besides, I find traditional costumes heart-warming; I've a collection of those little plastic dolls in transparent tubes.***
Nige: ***Not since this mornin' you haven't: I flushed 'em down the lav!***
Nick: ***NIGEL!***

THE FUTURE'S

Will It? Won't It? Worrabout it?

Dear Write Brothers
I wonder if you could answer a few questions?
1. Will the Mega-CD 2 work with the original Mega Drive?
2. Will the Mega-CD 2 cost less than the Mega-CD 1? Is there a difference in quality between them?
3. Which is better, *Shining in the Darkness*, *Shining Force* or *Landstalker*?
4. Is *Mortal Kombat* better than *Street Fighter II*?
5. Which is the best pinball game, *Sonic Spinball* or *Dragon's Fury*?
Michael Lewis, Elsewhere

Nick: ***Oh dear! All these questions — where do I begin?***
Nige: ***Wiv the first answer, four-eyes!***
Nick: ***Yes, yes, harsh but true:***
1. ***As I mentioned earlier, the Mega-CD 2 will work with the original Mega Drive, thanks to the MD–CD adaptor.***
2. ***The Mega-CD 2 costs £229.99, a lot cheaper than original machine. There's no*** **real** ***difference in quality, but the second version has a manually-operated lid, which is more convenient than an automatic drawer because discs can be removed without plugging in the Mega-CD.***
3. ***Everyone in the MEGA MACHINES office is positive that the best is*** **Landstalker. Shining Force** ***is the runner-up, but with a sequel already available in Japan, it would be wise to hang on to your pennies for a while longer.***
4. ***Although*** **Mortal Kombat** ***has impressive digitised sprites and nasty things like blood and fatality moves (great! —Nige),*** **Street Fighter II** ***and its many moves has greater lastability. If you can, try before you buy and make you own choice.***
5. ***If you want straight, arcade-like pinball, hold on till*** **Dragon's Fury II** ***comes out. For variety and overall playability, Sonic's the winner again (Full review next issue, I promise! —Ed)***





HEAR THE DRUMMER GET WICKED!

Dear Write Brothers
The epilepsy debate is getting a bit out of hand, isn't it? If **Sega** put a small sticker on games and warnings about this in adverts, instruction manuals, posters etc, like they do for cigarettes (eg, smoking causes cancer), everything would be all right and no one could complain.

Another thing — the age limit on CD games. I don't see the fuss. It's just like a movie on video tape: if a kid wants it, he'll get his mum or dad to buy it for him.

It's not worth putting an age limit on because, like videos, a 16-year-old kid will buy it and his 7-year-old brother will have a go. I know 6-year-olds that enjoy a good '18'-certificate film.
Craig Parker, Gateshead

Nige: ***I know 16-year-olds that enjoy a good...***
Nick: ***BE QUIET NIGEL! These are good points to spark off a debate. If you've anything to add, or there's something even remotely console-related you want to rant about, feel free to write in.***
Nige: ***Yeah! About these [cough!] fags [cough!]: they've never done me no 'arm. Unless you count the surgery I had last week, but that was nuffin', it just itched a bit, that's all. Coooouuuuggghh!***
Nick: ***Yuk!***

"Smoking Kills", H.M.Health Inspector.

SO BRIGHT...

Dear Write Brothers
Have you looked at the competition lately (only the Eubank vs Benn fight —Nige)?

MEGA have produced another fine piece of gutter press journalism: The Big Fight, their latest attempt at a debate. I'm sure **Nintendo** pulling out at the last minute caused them great upset. But you'd think they could have added to the debate rather than leaving one page blank.

The whole point of a debate is to exchange views about something in order to arrive at the truth or convince others. Printing, 'Oh, dear. Well what are you going to do with the rest of the page then…' accompanied by a picture of 'a big chicken' in place of a Nintendo spokesperson, hardly helped matters.

Just when you thought it was safe, *SEGA POWER* shouts 'Don't believe the hype' from their front cover. Inside, five whole pages are dedicated to silly comments publicised in numerous tabloids.

Remember the fuss caused by ***Dungeons & Dragons*** a few years ago — all our children going over to the dark side. So what happened? Nothing. A few TV stories, a flurry of tabloid hype then nothing. It had exhausted the public's interest so the story ended.

EDGE, **Future Publishing**'s latest offering. Gosh, what a totally radical design… NOT! Even the almost interesting advertising campaign was a straight pinch from *DESIGN*. (Looks like that poncy NEXT DIRECTORY to me! — Nige) As for the contents, the design layout I've seen before, though I must admit putting text on its side is a unique way of getting copy to fit (shame it looks so bad). Wait a minute — perhaps you're supposed to read it in the R360!

What truly bugged me was the lack of vision. We need ideas of what the future holds. *EDGE* even goes under the heading, 'The future of video gaming', yet what ideas have they covered? None!

The entire publication was a scrapbook of articles, pictures and reviews taken from its sister magazines. What rare piece of news there was came from various PR departments. Hardly a futuristic vision — more like a pre-release advertising campaign.

Where were the R&D boffins with their dreams of tomorrow? I don't want industrial secrets, but I do want to hear their dreams. What are the people with ideas holding back, wanting to create yet restricted by lack of money?

If you want my vision… I see a sterile room. There are some people waiting. I see lots of chairs and a magazine on a table, the name is blurred — *EGG* or *EASE*. I see a professional enter the room, acting like a dentist or maybe a doctor. He looks at the magazine, tosses it back down, picks up a 1972 edition of *READER'S DIGEST* and returns to his room!

Mike Church, Essex



Nick: ***Thanks for those scathing but interesting points. I don't feel I should add anything at this point but anyone who has anything to say about the magazine business, don't hesitate to write in and air you views.***
Nige: ***I've got 'airy…***
Nick: ***I like the sound of your dentist/doctor, I've had a subscription to*** **READER'S DIGEST** ***for several years, since I asked for one for my seventh birthday.***
Nige: ***I read*** **THE SCUM…**



"No it don't. Cough, Splutter, Croak" - Nige

Shop your mates!

Nick: ***MEGA MACHINES, in association with the Government, are setting up the Department Of Sega Sadboys — D.O.S.S for short — in order to bring to book citizens who are 'consolically challenged'.***
Nige: ***He means 'crap'.***
Nick: ***Cheers, Nige. It's vitally important that we build up a file of people who aren't very good at Mega Drive games, firstly because of EEC regulations, and secondly, so we can have a good laugh at them.***

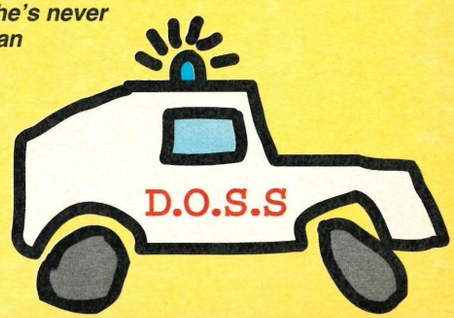
Our investigations began when we were alerted to the skills (or lack of them) of this young man:

Yeah, I admit it – I'm a complete twonka when it comes to Mega Drive games. (Can I have my free T-Shirt now then, or what?)



Andy Ward, of Ludlow

Nige: ***Worra loser!***
Nick: ***Andy, it seems, is the only person in the country who has never got to the bonus level of*** **Sonic 2.**
Nige: ***You*** **jest!**
Nick: ***I do not, brother of mine. Andy has never collected the necessary 50 rings in the six months or so of owning the cart. Hard to believe, I know, but his best mate Barry Jones swears on his mother's life that he's never done it. By looking at the picture above, we can believe him...***
Nige: ***Yeah.***
Nick: ***Do you know of anyone as sad as Andy? If so, please furnish us with the relevant info, plus photo, and send it to: Shop Your Mates, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW. We'll pass it on to our friends at the D.O.S.S and they'll do the rest...***



THE CHARTS

TEMPORARY SIGN

Only the hottest and/or most hyped games reach the top eleven. Yup, like in a every other department, MEGA MACHINES goes one step beyond. Eyes down for a cool cart...

You know how it is. There we were, working hard on the mag destined to revolutionise the computer publication industry, ripping up the rule book, breaking down the barriers and generally living on the edge like the hard-livin', high-powered, all-conquering studs we are. Yes, we were pretty chuffed with ourselves and no mistake.

Until suddenly, out of nowhere, a bolt exploded overhead and a shadowy figure appeared — none other than the ghost of Danny Kendall out of *Grange Hill*, with a sneer on his face and venom in his heart.

'So! What are you gonna call the charts section, then?' he mocked.

'You what?!' we replied, knees a-

USA MEGA drive!

1	Jurassic Park/Sega
2	Jungle Strike/Electronic Arts
3	Shining Force/Sega
4	RBI Baseball '93/Tengen
5	NHLPA Hockey '93/Electronic Arts
6	PGA Tour Golf II/Electronic Arts
7	X-Men/Sega
8	Hardball III/Accolade
9	Ms. Pacman/Tengen
10	Fatal Fury/Takara
11	Anyone's Guess/ManEd

Those Yanks are a bit keen on their sport sim's, aren't they? You shouldn't take much notice, though: they're into Benny Hill and the Royal Family in a big way, too...

UK MEGA cd!

ELSPA CHARTS PENGUIN

COMPILED BY GALLUP · SPONSORED BY PENGUIN BISCUITS

TO: STEVE SHIELDS
MEGA MACHINES
IMPACT MAGAZINES

FROM: DORIAN BLOCH
SOFTWARE RESEARCHER
GALLUP CHART DEPT.

TOP 10 SEGA MEGA-CD TITLES FOR THE 4 WEEKS ENDING 16/

1	BATMAN RETURNS	SEGA	4999	MC
2	NIGHT TRAP	SEGA	4999	MC
3	FINAL FIGHT	SEGA	4499	MC
4	ROAD AVENGER	SEGA	3999	MC
5	JAGUAR XJ220	SEGA	4499	MC
6	SHERLOCK HOLMES	SEGA	4499	MC
7	PRINCE OF PERSIA	SEGA	4499	MC
8	AFTERBURNER 3	SEGA	3999	MC
9	WOLFCHILD	SEGA	3999	ML
10	BLACK HOLE ASSAULT	SEGA	3999	ML

trembling.

'What's so revolutionary or exciting about charts, eh? They're just a load of, well, charts. What are you gonna do about *that*?'

Then, as suddenly as he'd arrived, he was gone.

A gauntlet had been well and truly hurled at our feet. An emergency meeting was called, and after hours of tense negotiation, a decision was reached. We decided to call it... **The Charts** (ta-dah!).

What was that you said? Crap title, is it? How *dare* you! We'd like to see *you* do better. In fact, why don't you?

Think of a title for this section, cut out the appropriate letters from the grid below, slam them down onto a postcard or back of a sealed-down envelope and send it to **'The Charts' is a crap name, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Publishing, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**.

Every month, the best suggestion's rewarded with none other than the Numero Uno UK Mega Drive game of the month. As Ric Flair would say, 'Whooooo!'

NB. MEGA MACHINES takes no responsibility for blackmail notes made with the below lettering.

A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	C	C
C	D	D	D	E	E	E	E	E	E
F	F	F	G	G	G	H	H	H	I
I	I	I	I	J	J	J	K	K	K
L	L	L	M	M	M	N	N	N	O
O	O	O	P	P	P	Q	Q	R	R
R	S	S	S	T	T	T	U	U	U
V	V	W	W	X	X	Y	Y	Z	Z

UK MEGA drive!

TO: STEVE SHIELDS
MEGA MACHINES
IMPACT MAGAZINES

FROM: DORIAN BLOCH
SOFTWARE RESEARCHER
GALLUP CHART DEPT.

* * CORRECTED VERSION * *

TOP 40 SEGA MEGADRIVE TITLES FOR THE 4 WEEKS ENDING 16/10/93

1	MORTAL KOMBAT	ARENA ENTERTAINMENT	4999	MD
2	JUNGLE STRIKE	ELECTRONIC ARTS	4499	MD
3	MICRO MACHINES	CODE MASTERS	3499	MD
4	JURASSIC PARK	SEGA	4999	MD
5	PGA TOUR GOLF 2	ELECTRONIC ARTS	3999	MD
6	FLASHBACK	US GOLD	4499	MD
7	SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2	SEGA	3999	MD
8	BUBSY THE BOBCAT	ACCOLADE	3999	MD
9	ULTIMATE SOCCER	SEGA	4499	MD
10	GUNSTAR HEROES	SEGA	4499	MD
11	ECCO	SEGA	3999	MD
12	COOL SPOT	VIRGIN	4499	MD
13	NHLPA HOCKEY 1994	ELECTRONIC ARTS	4499	MD
14	SUPER KICK OFF	US GOLD	4499	MD
15	ALIEN 3	ARENA ENTERTAINMENT	3999	MD
16	ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES	KONAMI	4499	MD
17	EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER	VIRGIN	3999	MD
18	WWF WRESTLEMANIA	FLYING EDGE	3799	MD
19	LEMMINGS	SEGA	3999	MD
20	LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE	ELECTRONIC ARTS	3999	MD
21	GENERAL CHAOS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	4499	MD
22	MIG-29 FIGHTER PILOT	DOMARK	4499	MD
23	TINY TOONS: BUSTERS TREASURE	KONAMI	3999	MD
24	STREETS OF RAGE 2	SEGA	4499	MD
25	ROAD RASH 2	ELECTRONIC ARTS	3999	MD
26	PGA TOUR GOLF	ELECTRONIC ARTS	3999	MD
27	THUNDERFORCE 4	SEGA	3999	MD
28	MEGA LO MANIA	VIRGIN	4499	MD
29	THE SIMPSONS	FLYING EDGE	3799	MD
30	STREETS OF RAGE	SEGA	1999	MD
31	X MEN	SEGA	3999	MD
32	MOONWALKER	SEGA	1999	MD
33	SUPER THUNDERBLADE	SEGA	1999	MD
34	TERMINATOR	VIRGIN	3999	MD
35	DESERT STRIKE	ELECTRONIC ARTS	3999	MD
36	WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	US GOLD	2999	MD
37	GREEN DOG	SEGA	3499	MD
38	TERMINATOR 2	FLYING EDGE	3999	MD
39	TALESPIN	SEGA	3499	MD
40	NHLPA HOCKEY 1993	ELECTRONIC ARTS	3999	MD

*The official Gallup ones, no less!

Jap Megadrive Chart — October 1993

1	Silpheed CD	Game Arts
2	Ecco the Dolphin	Sega
3	Puyo Puyo	Sega
4	Keio Attack Squadron CD	Victor Entertainment
5	Rocket Knight Adventure	Konami
6	J League Pro Striker	Sega
7	3 x 3 Eyes CD	Sega
8	The Super Shinobi 2	Sega
9	Jurassic Park	Sega
10	Illusion City CD	Microcabin

Courtesy of Beep Megadrive magazine

No, before you ask, we don't know what *Puyo Puyo* means, or what you do with it. Hope it's not summat a bit, y'know, *fruity*...

FREE MARKET ECONOMY

Like everywhere else, nothing works better in the computer magazine world than a good backhander. So, calling all software houses, PR offices and anyone else who'd like a mention in MEGA MACHINES — give us a bribe!

We wouldn't say no to a console or two, a nice bit of software or even a nice thick wad of cash — we're not fussy! In fact, anything of value. Perhaps a complementary ticket to the World Cup Final or a signed photo of Judy Finnegan? Maybe that Kenwood Chef you got last Christmas and don't know how to use.

Each month, we list the top five freebies which find their way to the MM desk (and one dreadful one!), and this month's chart looks something like this...

1 ***Ade's Free Trip To Vegas/Virgin Games***

2 ***Gigantic Nosh & Booze-Up/HMV Store***

3 ***Truckload Of Sony T-Shirts/Sony***

4 ***Bottle Of Bubbly/Acclaim Entertainment***

5 ***More Cool Spot Crap/Virgin Games***

— ***Ade's Meal At ASDA Store/US Gold***

READER CHART

MEMO: Steve Shields

Steve, what exactly do you mean by this 'reader chart' thing? Is it like one of those charts at the end of hospital beds? Does this mean we look for a reader who's a bit poorly, and take his temperature and that?

'We've decided that it must mean a chart of the top eleven MM readers. We're gonna ask them to write to **Reader Chart, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Publishing, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**, enclosing a mugshot and a good reason why they deserve to be in the top eleven.

'Hope we've got it right. If we have, are you going to let us out of these strait-jackets and allow home for our tea?'

SONIC CD

He's back, bigger and bluer than ever. But the question on everyone's lips must be: is *Sonic CD* better? Only one way to find out…

It seems the entire world and his uncle have been waiting for Sega's flagship character to appear on disc. With his adventures already chronicled in two Mega Drive games, *Sonic Spinball* and an arcade machine, Sega would be foolish not to release Sonic on their most advanced machine. And with the memory capacity of CDs and the Mega-CD's scaling and sprite rotation abilities, you'd expect *Sonic CD* to be something special, right?

First let's look at the story. Unlike past outings, *Sonic CD* takes place not on the hedgehog's home of Moebius but the Miracle Planet above it. Once a year, this astral body drifts into orbit; this time around the evil Doctor Robotnik has chained it down!

Apparently defeated in *Sonic 2* (yeah, sure), Robotnik has returned and is using the elusive Chaos Emeralds to power his latest wacky invention, a time machine he's using to travel into the Miracle Planet's past and deposit time/space warping machines.

While on a speedy scouting mission, Sonic discovered the planet chained to a mountain carved into the likeness of his old nemesis, Robotnik. Add to this the disappearance of Amy Rose, Sonic's tarot card-reading girlfriend, and Sonic realises the Doc is back and up to no good. Sonic races up the chain, headlong into his most dangerous adventure yet.

Time for a change

All of the above is detailed in a stunning cartoon intro sequence which kicks off the game (check out the pics on this page). Then Sonic appears, cloaked in shadows, and spins round to present a familiar title screen.

As with previous *Sonic*s, there's a serious lack of options: start a new game, continue an old one (infinite continues) or try your hand at the Time Attack (see box out). Kick off with a new game and what's it like?

Well, there are seven crazy zones to speed through, each split up into three levels. In the first two sections of each, Sonic must time travel into the past to destroy Robotnik's deadly machines. This results in a good future for that zone — or a bad one if you fail.

The third level of every zone is where you find Robotnik, controlling one of his latest hedgehog-hacking

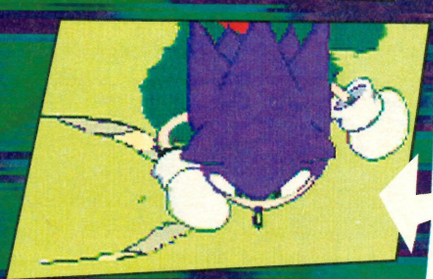


SONIC SEQUENCE



There goes Aunt Flow, and here comes…





… Why, it's Sonic The Hedgehog! Where are you going in such a hurry, Sonic The Hedgehog?



Hmm? Oh, I'm, just running around like a crazy man…



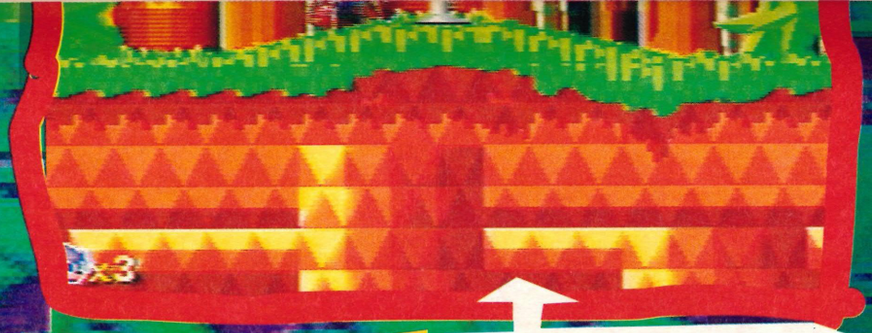
… And this oriental chick's singing a song, but I can't tell what it is 'cos the CD keeps skipping

/////AL 82%/////



All right, it's a new Sonic game. And yes, it's a CD. But before we start fiddling with ourselves in an orgy of celebration, let's just chill for a minute, take a step back, purse our lips, put our hand over our chin and go 'Hmmmmm...'.

Because for most people, this game won't just make their wallets 60 quid lighter, oh no. For most people, *Sonic CD* is the excuse they've been waiting for to seriously think about getting a Mega-CD.



devices. On top of all this, there are bonus levels, accessed by collecting 50 rings, where Sonic may collect seven fabled Time Stones to stop the Doc once and for all. Phew!

Sonic CD may be finished in a few hours, if you're good enough, but to see the full ending you must find *all* the machines and all Time Stones. Who said this was going to be easy?

Full speed ahead

As well as Robotnik's army of metallic misfits, Sonic has to face the added danger of Metal Sonic, a revamped and more powerful version of Mecha Sonic from the second cart.

How does Sonic time travel? That's easy. Situated around each level are 'Past' and 'Future' markers. Decide where you want to go, touch a marker then build up enough speed to travel through time (as in *Back to the Future* trilogy). The challenge comes in finding the right post at the right time then finding enough space for a good run-up.

The levels are much bigger than in previous games and bursting with loops, platforms, hidden items, vile villains and the usual devices, such as speed boots, invincibility and extra lives.

A brief mention has to go to the incredible music. Sega use hardcore techno tunes and mellow ambient sounds to add to the atmosphere of each level. If you don't fancy playing the game, chill out to the music!

After this supreme adrenalin rush, what will Sega come up with for *Sonic 3*? You'll have to wait and see. Until then, check out *Sonic CD* for awesome speed, incredible tunes and level after level of spiky action.

And — what an amazing coincidence! — it's nearly Christmas! So lots of kids with their Sonic quilt covers, Sonic pencil cases and Sonic whatevers know what to pester their parents for this year, don't they?

How much does the Mega-CD cost these days? £270? 230 for the Mega-CD 2? If you can't live without the new Sonic but haven't got a Mega-CD, it's gonna cost you (or your next of kin) around *£290*. Say it out loud. Let it ring round your head.

I don't know about you, but if I was paying that much for Sonic, I'd expect him to do a bit more for me than a few rolls and spins. I'd expect him to take me to work in the morning, do my washing-up, get the shopping in, pick me up from work, take me out to dinner, take interest in what I had to say *and* not get pushy on the first date.

Considering it's on CD, the music's crap. If it's not tenth-rate techno, it's the entire James Last collection — the kind of music you hear on those crappy German satellite programmes you watch for about ten minutes just in case topless dancers come on.

Another kick in the teeth comes from disk access. When you reach the end of a level, you're treated to five seconds of blank screen. And there was me thinking that we were in the '90s and had left Amiga-style stopping and starting behind.

It's a testament to the original idea that somehow, despite the fact it's not a quantum leap from its predecessors, *Sonic CD*'s still the best platformer available. By introducing the time warp element, Sega have done enough to warrant its release. *Just.*

MODE 7 MAYHEM!

Okay, the Mega-CD hasn't got a Mode 7 like the SNES, but its sprite scaling and rotation chips pull off the most amazing tricks in bonus stages. In a normal level, Sonic earns a bonus round by collecting at least 50 rings before passing the finishing post and leaping into the giant, spinning golden ring at the end.

Each bonus level features Sonic running around a *Mario Kart*-style 3D race track. Hovering above the ground are drifting UFOs, six of which have to be destroyed to earn a Time Stone. Extra rings, speed boots or extra time are awarded when a UFO's blown up.

What you really need is a clock to add more seconds to the timer. It's constantly running down and with only a minute to reach all the UFOs, you need all the time you can get.

Tracks are littered with a variety of objects, some friendlier than others. Bumpers bounce you around like a spiky pinball, fans spin Sonic through the air and springs are used to gain height. On the flip side, spikes causes Sonic to lose his rings and touching water makes the timer run down incredibly fast.

Locating and destroying six UFOs results in one of the seven fabled Time Stones floating into Sonic's eager hands. Can you collect them all?

And Sonic storms past the goal. Another level complete, so let's go over to Dave who's with Sonic right now. Dave.



Time Attack



Oh my lord, that sonuvabitch has gone ballistic! He must have hit one of those Past or Future signs. Good luck, son.









Gravity? Ha! Our Sonic laughs in the face of anything made from meat stock and vegetables!



/////JAMES 89%/////



***Sonic CD*, eh? I'm gonna have to wait for it to come out on vinyl, 'cos I haven't got a CD player. (Er, James, it's for the *Mega*-CD —Steve.)**

Ahem. *Sonic CD*, eh? This is bound to be bigger, better and completely chocka with spesh effects. Isn't it? Well, it's definitely bigger. There ain't gonna be any arguments there.

But as far as being better goes, it looks like the same old Sonic point 'n' run tactics to me. Does this mean I'm dissin' the spiky one, er, man? Well, yeah, in a way.

Most of it's been seen before, so it's whether or not you're going to get your money's worth. If you're a veteran *Sonic* player, be warned: you'll complete it in a couple of hours. Of course, you can always go back and explore for... Um, things that you haven't found yet.

At the end of the day, is this utilising the Mega-CD to its full capabilities? I don't reckon it is. All we've ended up with is CD-quality sound, a bigger storage medium and a couple of nice effects.

Is it worth the extra £20? Too right, mate! It's flippin' Sonic, innit!



PUBLISHER	SEGA
PRICE	£59.99
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW (IMPORT)
SIZE	CD

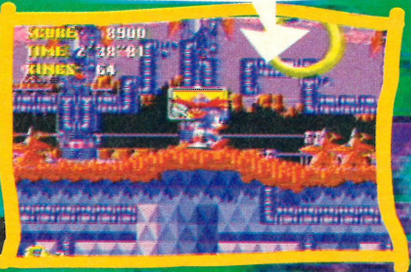
OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	5
CONTINUES	INFINITE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	YES
SPECIALS	NONE

Welcome to Quartz Quantrant III. This is where all Sonic watch type merchandise is made.



Mode 7, here I come. Hit the ring for a bonus level.



/////NICK 84%/////



Sega couldn't win, could they? They could either make *Sonic CD* much the same as its cart-based brothers, in which case people would complain it's unoriginal, just bigger, or add loads of features and wait for the complaints that it's too different from the formula we know and love.

Well, they opted for the former but added enough new features to make it worth buying. As expected, it's huge. Each zone has three acts, and each act has three time zones. Along with five bonus levels, that makes... well, I was never much cop at maths, but something pretty huge anyway.

I love the *Sonic Spinball*-type areas, where you 'flipper' and bounce yourself around until you reach Robotnik at the top. Sure, it was done in *Sonic 2*, but this has a bigger, better feel. The audio quality is fantastic, as you'd expect, but the songs themselves make Kris Kross sound like kd lang.

I wouldn't spend 60 quid on it, but then I'm not enough of a Sonic freak to salivate over anything that vaguely resembles the blue ball of fuzz. If you see things differently and already have a Mega-CD, this disc will keep you happy.









BONUS LEVELS

Smash the UFOs within the time limit to get the Chaos Emmeralds.



TIME TO RUN!

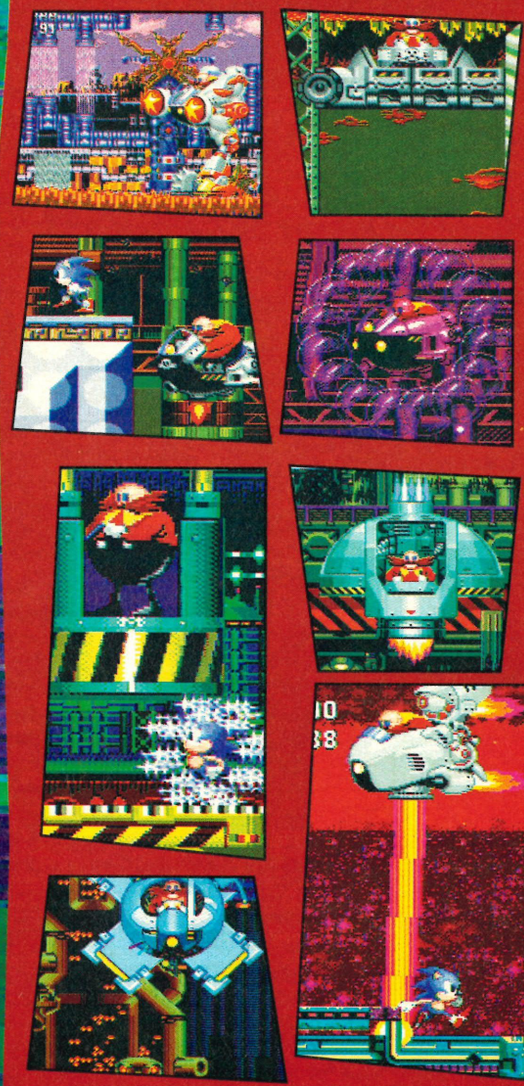
A new feature for a *Sonic* game is the Time Attack option. This handy facility allows boy racers out there to enter any level, blast through at top speed and set new time records.

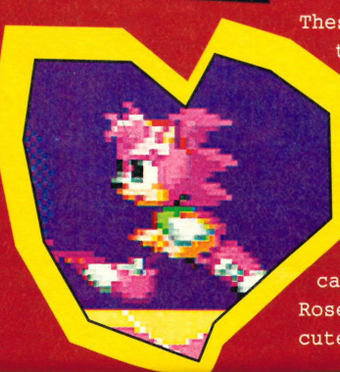
One of the things we've noticed at MEGA MACHINES is *Sonic* players often send their fastest times for both games, so this option not only gives you another challenge but also makes up for the lack of a two-player option. Gamers can try their hand at beating each other's times and setting super speed records only *Sonic CD* experts can beat.

But turn off the Mega-CD and your speed records are wiped off, right? Wrong! You can store your hot times in the Mega-CD's back-up memory, so you can show them off for years to come. Cor, ain't technology wonderful?



Robotnik's incarnations



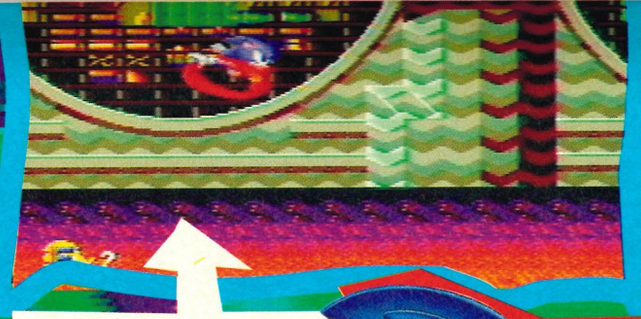


These two are the cause of all Sonic's troubles: Robotnik himself, and Sonic's bird called Amy Rose. Rather cute, isn't she?

Cut this out and show it to the shop assistant if you want to buy the game in a foriegn country and don't speak the lingo.







Here we see the familiar Sonic 'point and go' tactics. Good, aren't they?



Hey look! Those very same tactics are being used again…



… And again. What is this? Where are the breaks on this thing. Aaaaaahhhhhhhhhh!!!!

/////WARREN 79%/////



Sonic CD was originally due for release *months* ago, but Sega recalled it for reprogramming because they feared it was too similar to its cart-based cousins. Judging by the game we've ending up with, I dread to think what *that* version was like!

Okay, the levels are bigger, but turn the volume down and *Sonic CD*'s little different to the hedgehog's previous games. That isn't altogether a bad thing (those carts are great, so if it ain't broke, why mend it?) and I've no big ideas what they *should've* included, but I can't hide my disappointment.

Having three versions of each level's a neat idea, but as the offshoots are past and future approaches to the standard one, the colour and style of graphics are the main differences. The crude rhythmic and gritty techno remixes of the level's music denote the alternate time lines more successfully.

As for the famous *Mario Kart*-style bonus rounds… whoops. They're *awful* at first, and even when you've built up speed, the screen update's relatively slow and jerky. The controls are nothing to write home about, either, so for many games you'll earn Time Stones through luck as much as judgement.

Enough of the bad, the good news is gameplay's as slick as you'd expect of a *Sonic* game; the same goes for the graphics. Sonic's new dash is cool — head down, arms trailing behind — and neat touches like projectors displaying holograms of Metal Sonic prove that, in some ways, the extra months of development paid off.

Mega-CD owners should put this disc at the top of their shopping list; those without the new shoebox would be better off with EA's *James Pond 3*.

///STEVE 89%//



I first heard about *Sonic CD* over a year ago. 'This is the game that will put the Mega-CD at the very top of everyone's Christmas list,' was the word at the time, and here we are in the run-up to that commercial extravaganza, so was it an idle boast or an understatement?

A tricky one to evaluate, this. One thing I *can* say for sure is that *Sonic CD* should be at the top of all Mega-CD *owners*' Xmas hit lists. But as for *non*-CD owners forking out the extra £270 just to be able to play it? Hmm…

Taking all the best elements from the first two *Sonic* releases and throwing in a few special extras, there isn't *that* much hedgehog freaks haven't seen before. The strategy elements (when or if to zip back to the past or forwards to the future) help enormously, as does that dazzling soundtrack, but the promising bonus levels are a birrova let-down, it must be said… as is the lack of a two-player option.

Stunning to listen to, great to look at, the question has to be: Is it worth all the extra cash? If you're a complete Sonic nut, the answer would have to be a resounding 'Yes' — it's the best Sonic game to date, without question. But those gamers who're tiring of the format would have to think very seriously before levelling an AK47 at Santa's private parts.

GRAPHICS	86
SOUND	90
PLAYABILITY	89
LASTABILITY	82
ORIGINALITY	79
OVERALL	85



All the old power-ups from previous games are here.



The new Time Warp feature can be a bit of a hindrance.



But enough of the game, here's a fantastic Christmas gift idea - a Sonic and Tails pencil case set.

PULL!!!

Sellotape this bit under the tab marked A

Shoot-'em-up Review

SILPHEED

MEGA cd!

Is it? Nah, couldn't be. Hang on – IT IS! After months of hype and speculation, the biggest ever Mega-CD game is here. James Beaven was first with the flappy scarf and flying goggles.

///JAMES 90%//

Eek! I haven't left meself a whole lot of room. Erm, this game's a must for shoot-'em-up fans, and the graphics are real MD-CD showcase material!





1

Silpheed. Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

It's got 12 levels. Whoooo-whatchi-ahhhhhhhhh!

2





3

The intro and between-level screens are grea… Ffffffflippinell!

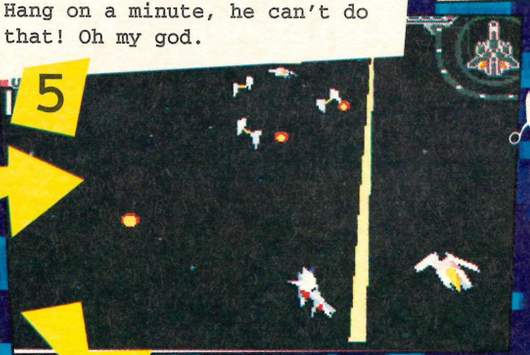


4

The adrenalin buzz is unbelievable, and the graphics are… Cor.

Hang on a minute, he can't do that! Oh my god.

5



The rest you can work out for yourselves from the screenshots, but bare this in mind: Silpheed is like no shoot-'em-up you've ever seen before, and there's no way it could be done on cart format. Whoops.

11

GAME OVE



10

YOU STUPID GIT! Sorry, yeah, it gets real tough and you've… only… got… three attempts to get through the lot. Erm, the…

Strike three!
The scenario roughly



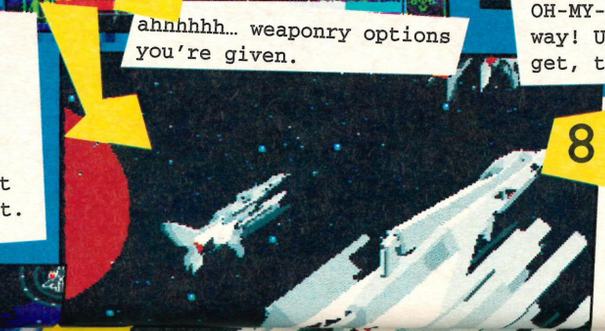
7

ahnnhhh… weaponry options you're given.



6

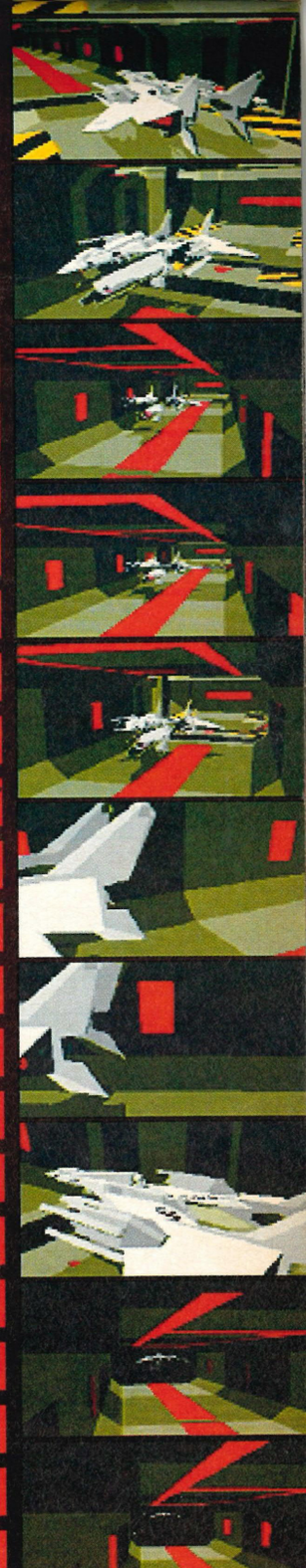
OH-MY-GOD! Get out of the way! Um, the more points you get, the more…



8

Phew! An in-betweeny screen, at last. The scenario's pretty much standard, but is put into play with awesome effect.
Usually, you read the scenario in the instruction manual,





involves protecting Earth from Zacarte, an evil terrorist (all bad dudes' names begin with 'Z'). You're guided through the levels, which is a good job because you need all your concentration for the chaotic baddy-blasting.

Oops. We're off again. Right. The first level's a doddle but it hots up to a…



9

then ignore it because it doesn't play any part in the game itself. This one, on the other hand, cannot be ignored 'cos it jumps up every now and then and smacks you in the gob with its stunning graphics.

///STEVE 86%////



This game has received some seriously bad press. I first saw screenshots from Silpheed before the summer and, like everyone else who copped an eyeful of those grainy, polygon-festooned pics, swooned with delight. By the look of it, surely this was the game that would push the Mega-CD into the limelight. But then the reviews started to appear…

As far as the graphics were concerned, there were no dissenters: excellent, the best yet. But the gameplay? Uh-oh, worra bummer. Another classic case of all mouth and no trousers (by all accounts).

Being a cynical little oik by nature, I reserved judgement until I got the chance to play the game myself and, would you credit it, guv'nor? It's a cracker!

Galaxians '93 would be a little unkind, but the waves of baddies and movement of your craft *do* remind me of that prehistoric coin-op. Simple it may be, but there's no harm in that — especially when it looks and sounds so piggin' great!

If you've already got a Mega-CD, don't hesitate. If you haven't, here's another good reason to get one.

Right then, let's have another crack at getting to that elusive eighth level…



PUBLISHER	GAME ARTS
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	NOVEMBER
SIZE	MASSIVE!

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	2
LIVES	1
CONTINUES	3
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	FRIED RICE, PLEASE!

BUT I HAVEN'T GOT A MEGA-CD!

Amazing Free Gift!

Tape this tab to the back of Tab marked X

Amazing!!! Animatronic Viewfinder

Cut this panel out to reveal the F-U-N!

Incredible FREE gift!

X

Wot? No M-CD? Fear not! With this extraordinary device (absolutely **free** to MEGA MACHINES readers), you too can experience the graphical delights of the phenomenal opening sequence to this stunning Mega-CD game!

Simply cut the strips from the edges of this page, stick 'em together where indicated, then pull them through your exclusive 'Animatronic Viewfinder Thing' in the direction of the arrow. Before your very eyes, you'll discover slick, polygon graphics doing their crazy thang. Well, sort of…

Next month, *Danish Dentist Fills The Wrong Cavity* will make its 'Animatronic' debut — so place your orders NOW!

GRAPHICS	95
SOUND	94
PLAYABILITY	89
LASTABILITY	80
ORIGINALITY	92
OVERALL	88



Great thanks to Console Concepts for lending us Silpheed. Cheers Fellas!

Tab A

It is truly FAB!

DUNE CD

MEGA CD!



The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!

ROLE PLAYING GAME REVIEW

Frank Herbert's visionary series of science fiction novels didn't go down well with critics when they became a movie. Now a combination of both appear as an RPG, the verdict is...

If all you love in life is a good blast-'em-up, couldn't live without your daily dose of punching people off their bikes in *Road Rash II*, or throw a tantrum if your devilish intent.'

No, we mean it. It's not worth reading any more, so just turn to some review of a mindless game. Go on. Do it.

Well, now we've got rid of that bunch of losers, we can have a *real* chat about *Dune*.

It's a rare occurrence in MEGA MACHINES when anyone's crowded around a new game two hours after it came in. Even now, several hours after its arrival, there's still a bunch of dedicated *Dune*rs, offering back-seat advice and comments on the game.

Phew, what a scorcher!

As you may have guessed from the screenshots, *Dune*'s an RPG. The

Ooh, have we got a video?

The book records all information, and contains over ten minutes of full-motion video.









DUNE

PUBLISHER	VIRGIN GAMES
PRICE	£T.B.A.
RELEASE DATE	NOV
SIZE	CD

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	N/A
CONTINUES	N/A
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
SAVE GAME	YES
SPECIALS	NONE

it was offered to your clan (with a sizeable cut to him, of course), it was an opportunity too good to pass up.

Hardy Fremen

But there are problems: the indigenous Fremen population are willing to help you mine the spice only if you keep them happy by providing equipment and visiting regularly to keep morale high.

Dangers are ever-present in the form of the Harkonnen, the rival clan to the Atreides, who occupied your home when they controlled spice

your mother stops you pulling heads off shoulders, read no further.

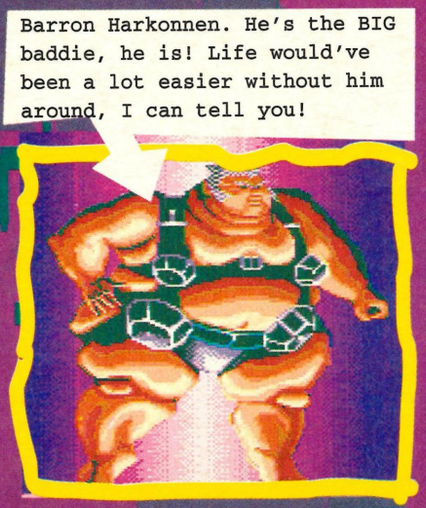
We don't mean 'Read no further' as in 'Go and buy this game, NOW', we mean 'Read no further' as in 'Go away. Get lost. Vamoose. How dare you sully this spiritual gathering with



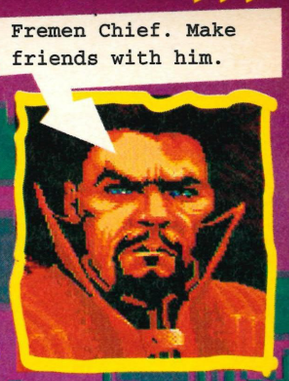
plot will be familiar if you've seen the film: you are Paul Atreides, the 15-year-old descendant of an ancient family on the planet Arrakis. Commonly known as Dune, this world's intensely hot, its surface made up almost entirely of sand.

The only reason for settling on such a barren, inhospitable planet is that a spice called Melange, the most valuable property in the universe, grows there. While the spice has life-prolonging qualities and pleasant side effects, it's so precious because it provides the key to deep space navigation.

Melange is in great demand with the most powerful people in the universe, notably the Emperor of the corporation which controls the universe. He holds the lucrative contract for the right to mine it and when production and have left traps that you, your family or advisers













/////NICK 95%/////



Normally, I'm not one for games that require a long attention span: one quick blast and I'm looking for the next thrill. But this one's different. *Very* different. It held me captive for hours as I battled to keep the good ship Atreides afloat in the harsh environment of Dune, trying to overcome the hurdles which lay in my path (and drowning in a sea of mixed metaphors).

***Dune*'s unquestionable supremacy over most of its competitors comes from two areas: the first is the much-underrated and underused style of play where you're more or less free to make your own decisions (and mistakes) without coming to an immediate sticky end. *Cosmic Spacehead* is a good game, in its own way, but you can't progress unless you solve puzzles involving objects found in different areas of the game, so you're guided toward the 'correct' ending, whereas *Dune* lets you go in any way you see fit.**

The other aspect that makes it so good is the way that the CD medium's used. It may have been possible to get the main elements onto a cart, but the way video clips are used as an integral, if not strictly necessary, part of the game turns it from a decent exercise in strategy into a fantastically atmospheric interactive film.

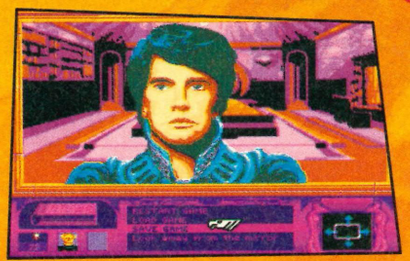
It's helped along by absolutely incredible sound — the Jean-Michel Jarre-ish music conjures up the atmosphere of the whole game. It's always a brilliantly apt addition, never annoying and an enormous breakthrough for this medium. Incredible!

***Dune*'s by no means for everyone — you'll either be bored stiff very quickly or in raptures of excitement for days. If you can afford to fork out for a Mega-CD and this game, let me say this: you know the kind of intensity of feeling and atmosphere you rarely get from fiction (for me, this has come from only eight or nine books)? Well, this game has it.**

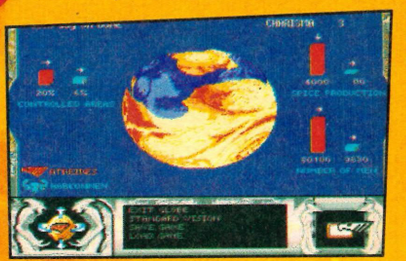
Don't you just love being in control?



Calling up the map of Dune shows settlements and colonies.



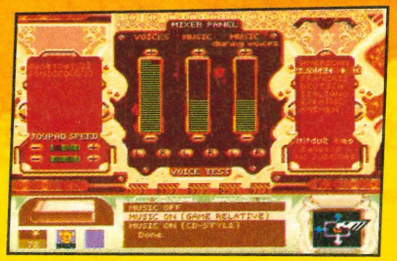
The mirror acts as a Save/Load game facility for the vain.



This shows graphs of Spice output, motivation, and charisma.



We didn't actually find a use for this, but it looked good.



The Mixer Panel controls sound and speech bubbles. Nifty, huh?



After areas have been prospected, they show up on the Spice density map.

may fall into. They're out to re-capture control of Melange and you'll have to arm Fremen troops (having first persuaded them to fight) to fight them.

Giant sandworms, too, pose a threat to your desire for peace, as they're fiercely protective of their territory and attack anything they see as a threat, including the machinery used to mine spice.

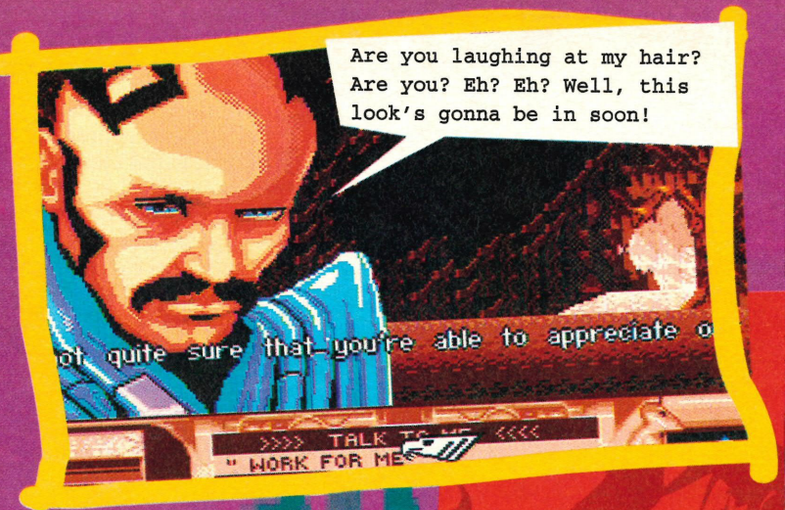
Help comes via interaction with people around you, like your family and advisers. With the correct people, like your telepathic mother, you can find vital places like the communications room and armoury.

Charming man

You can visit people in your ornithopter and listen to their advice, and as you recruit followers and build their loyalty, your charisma and telepathic powers develop. You get visions of important events on Dune and can communicate with followers by mind control.

Dune's mechanics are quite simple: you get a series of options at the bottom of the screen, such as talking and moving. Much of your time's spent getting information out of people and learning the current state of affairs on Arrakis through various maps and charts, but you have a sophisticated range of options which changes with your situation and abilities.

The way the game adapts to your situation extends beyond the options: when you've been told to ask someone about something (not to give too much away!), for example, and start to talk to that person, your character automatically asks a relevant question.





Miss the speaker

One of the most memorable features in a highly memorable RPG is the way video clips are interwoven with the game itself: you often need to consult an onscreen book and you can call up full-motion video clips to add that extra sense of reality.

There are neat touches which a cart wouldn't have room for: when characters talk to you, the words are spoken as well as displayed onscreen. Fortunately for those speedy readers among us, you can cut the speaker short, instead of having to endure spiel you already know.

Dune uses many elements to form a coherent whole, and as you'll have guessed, is more of an exercise in strategy and diplomacy than a typical find-objects-and-use-them-in-different-places job. The skills you need are diverse and the challenge isn't for those who like to finish games in a couple of afternoons or compete against friends to show off.

But if you want a cerebral challenge for a change, why not have a look at *Dune*? It could well be the game to make you buy a Mega-CD.

Quick, to the Ornithopter-type thing!

The Ornithopter is your main form of transport around Dune. Or at least, until you make friends with the Worms.



/////JAMES 92%/////



If you haven't read any of the *Dune* books or watched the film, you can't even begin to comprehend how deep this game is. That won't affect your enjoyment, though — if anything, this'll make you run out and rent the video.

The first thing that jumps up and smacks you in the face is the fact the characters' voices and lip movements are perfectly synchronised — with none of that jumping about the Mega-CD's so famous for.

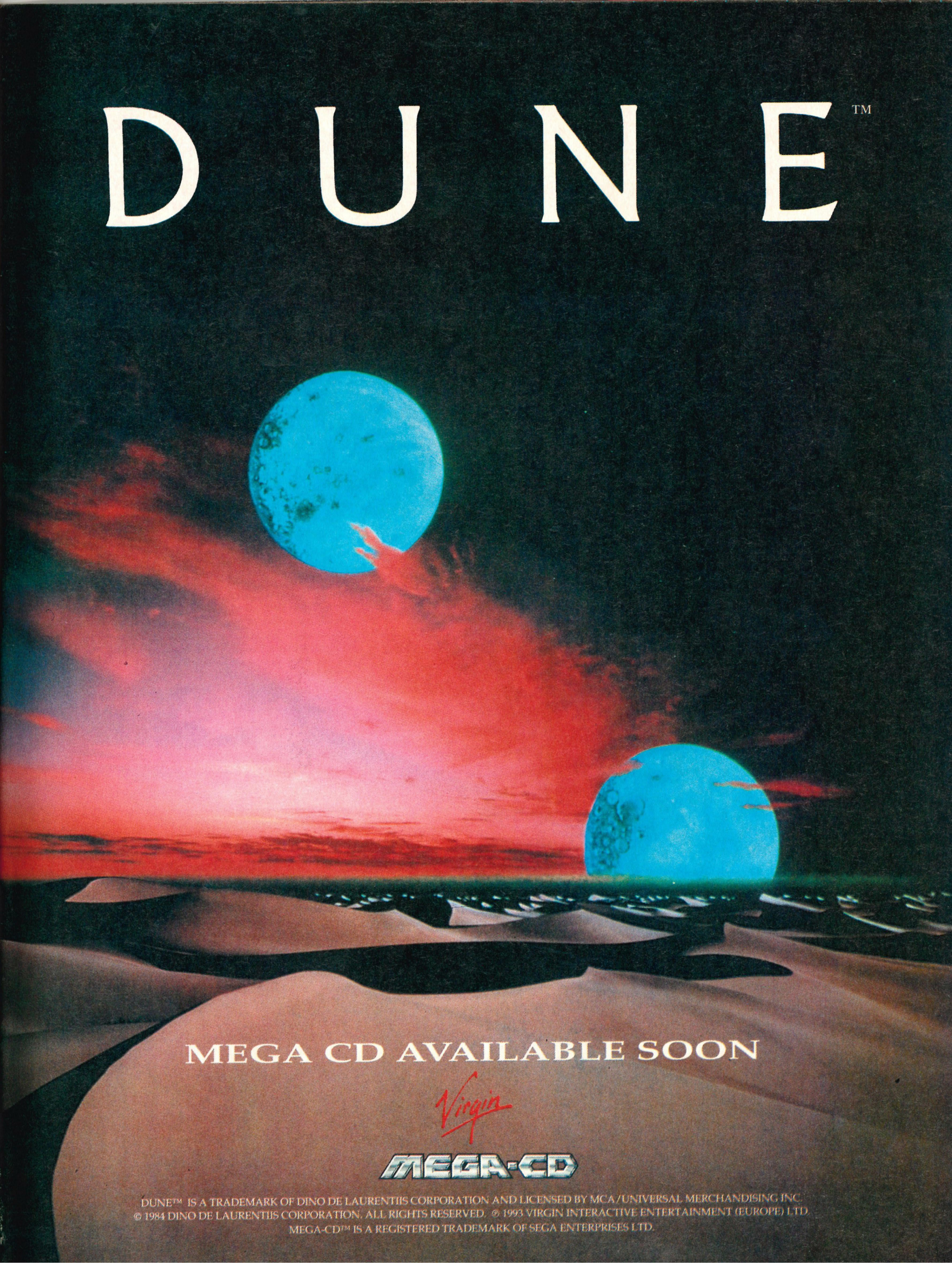
And if you want to play around with elements of the sound, the Mixer Panel caters for everything. This is a nice touch, guaranteed to appeal to anyone with a fondness for graphic equalisers.

As for the gameplay, most of the RPGs I've played before have either been a walk in the park or so frustratingly difficult I sought expert help. *Dune*, on the other hand, grips you from the start. I doubt if anyone will concede once this takes up residence in the Mega-CD disc tray.

Even though there's no apparent urgency while playing, I found myself rushing from place to place like there was no tomorrow. And when my troops *did* come under attack, methodical play went out the window. This is easily the most involving game I've played — you couldn't get more interactive without actually being there.

After playing this CD version and seeing how expertly the full-motion video is interwoven into the gameplay, it's going to be interesting to see what *Dune II* on cart has to offer.

GRAPHICS	89
SOUND	92
PLAYABILITY	83
LASTABILITY	90
ORIGINALITY	87
OVERALL	94



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The Golden Girls and Guys!

You know what we look like, but what about the unsung heroes of the software world? Those folk who beaver away behind the scenes, plotting, planning and promoting what they hope will be smash hit games for Sega nuts worldwide. Time to open a few doors, have a nosey in a few nooks and crannies and discover who does what, where and why. And if you're considering a career in the biz, we ask those all-important 'job-finding' questions to help you on your way.

Would you believe there are folk in this wacky world of ours who assume working in the software business is glamorous? They reckon industry bods drive fast cars, wear snazzy clothes and stay up till three in the morning, eating and drinking their way through someone else's credit card.

Lo and behold, it's *exactly* like that. Ahem! Errrr… sorry. Actually, it's NOTHING like that *at all*. Blood, sweat and many beers… um, tears go into ensuring each and every game you see on the shelves at your local computer store makes the grade.

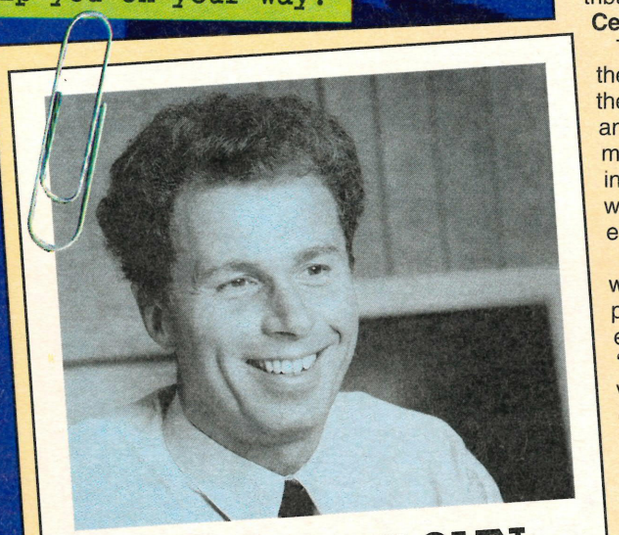
And we're not just talking programming, here. While you're busy going about your daily grind, industry boffins everywhere ensure their next release is well produced, well marketed and well promoted before it appears and, just as important, holds its own when out on the shelves.

So the question is — who are the folk who make all this possible? What do they get up to each and every day? Why do they do it? Why is it necessary? How did they find their way into their job? And most frightening of all, what if *you're* interested in following the same career?

Each month we target a software house, talk to some of the folk in the know and find out exactly what *does* go on behind the scenes in the software industry (don't worry, it's all clean and above board!). This month, the guys 'n' gals at **US Gold** in Birmingham reveal all — the folk who brought us such gems as *Super Kick Off*, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, *Olympic Gold* and the wonderfully wonderful *Flashback*. Who's behind such corkers? Time to be nosey-parkers…



Welcome to US Gold and Centresoft! All the glitz and gloss of the games



GEOFF BROWN

Once upon a time there was a man. This man had £200. Ten years later, that £200 had become a £70 million turnover. The end.

A fairy tale? Anything but! The man in question is Geoff Brown, Chairman of **US Gold**. At the age of 37, Geoff's idea to use his £200 life savings to buy disk

Geoff, what does your role as US Gold's chairman involve?

the potential for buying and selling games. Many of the games in the States weren't available in the UK.'

He continued, 'I sold the first lot, bought more, sold those and it really went from there. That was the start of our game distribution company, **Centresoft**.'

Things don't stay the same for long in the computer world and soon the games market was changing. Disk games were being converted to cassette.

'That's really when we started publishing,' explains Geoff. 'We began converting disk games onto tape. It was then that I needed a name for the publishing side of the company. I wanted it to reflect our dealings with the States. US Gold actually started life as US Gold, All American Software.'

And so it was that US Gold began programming and developing games for the Spectrum, Amstrad and Commodore, buying licences, producing coin-op games and blazing a trail through the software world…

Geoff, what does your role as US Gold's chairman involve?

Patience, perseverance and man management. Definitely man management. And something I'm *not* is out of touch. I still understand the youth market and that's *so* important.

I'm a musician, I played in a band. I was a schoolteacher. I'm always in touch with what's going on out there. A person in my role has *got* to understand the market.

What the biggest reward your job offers?

Having a hit. I'm a frustrated musician! We're producing the pop music of computers.

I love seeing a game develop. Watching a game unfold from inception to completion. It's all about being successful and having competition. It's a lot of hard work.

There are 270 people here all working *really* hard. To think those 270 people are all feeding off the company is quite a feeling.

What advice would you give someone who wants to follow a similar career?

You *have* to be single-minded and be prepared to take risks along the way. There's no room in this industry for people who don't take risks. We took on Sega, it was a gamble — we won.

And you *have* to be respected for what you do. You *must* earn people's respect.

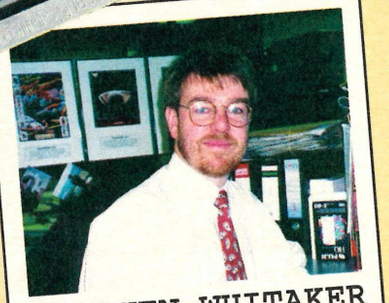
Where do you see US Gold in five years' time?

Most software companies are led by the hardware that's available, the games machines that are around. We will be producing fantastic games for CD machines and, if you think about it, we've come full circle. We're now producing music for CD games and, in effect, making records.

US Gold has come a long way. Next year we celebrate our tenth

104





STEPHEN WHITAKER

Stephen Whitaker is **US Gold**'s Marketing Manager for cartridge products. It's his role to liaise with Geoff Brown on game licences. When a licence has been agreed, Stephen investigates the benefits of that licence.

He explains: 'Take *Winter Olympics*, for example. The game was taken on by US Gold because of its sheer size and there's an actual event we can link the game to.

'I look at the commercial aspects of a product. I check out the competition, what other games similar to the one we're producing are already out there.

'I have to look at what US Gold has to do in the market place. Draw up a marketing plan, how we can best support a product, keep track of presale activities, check on trade support and consumer advertising. That's when you get into the glamorous side of things.

How long have you being Marketing Manager at US Gold?
I've been in my present position for a year now, although I've actually worked for the group, Centregold, for two years.

What qualifications do you hold?
I've degrees in Chemistry and Physics and a degree in Marketing. The Marketing degree gives you the theoretical knowledge. The practical knowledge comes with the job. All my jobs have been Marketing jobs.

What personal qualities are needed to do your job?
You have to be determined in everything you do. You must be prepared to see projects through right to the end and have faith in what you're doing. If you want a 9–5 job, you won't succeed in Marketing.

So is that the advice you'd give someone who wants to go into Marketing?
Yes. You've *got* to be determined — stick with it. Think laterally. There are lots of opportunities and ideas in Marketing.

What rewards are there?
Seeing a project come to fruition. I'm already working on projects way into next year, but I always go back and see how plans I worked on from the start came together. It's a good feeling.

When you were little, what job did you dream of doing?
I wanted to be Batman! I had this strange fascination with the Caped Crusader.

Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
Doing Shelagh's job!



SHELAGH TUITE

Shelagh Tuite is 25 and Marketing Executive at **US Gold**. She came into the industry straight from school.

Having been at Centresoft, she joined Gremlin Graphics as a junior then US Gold as a salesperson. She's held her position as Marketing Executive for six months.

Shelagh, what does your role involve?
It's my job to ensure the sales and PR people have all the material they need. That means as much product information as I can get, any game samples they need, screenshots and demos.

What qualifications do you hold?
I've ten 'O' levels and a Marketing CAM certificate.

Do you have to be very organised?
Yes. Organisational skills are essential. You have to be incredibly patient, having all these people shouting at you!

Knowing the best information to pass on to the right people is also very important.

What are the best bits about being a Marketing Executive?
I think it's the creative side. Coming up with ideas, like what we can display alongside a game when it's on sale, things like that.

Are there any bad times?
The job *can* get really hectic, but that makes it all the more interesting. I'm always working to time constraints, too.

What would you say to someone who wants to follow a similar career?
Just get your foot in the door with a software house or distributor. Once you're in, there are plenty of opportunities to chop and change jobs.

What did you want to be when you were younger?
A policewoman.

What do you see yourself doing in five years' time?
Stephen's job! Well, you have to set your sights high, don't you?



NICOLA WHITEHEAD

Nicola Whitehead is 28 years old. She's in charge of European PR. Nicola deals with the national and regional press, lifestyle mags, Sunday supplements and radio. She has several European territories under her wing: Italy, Spain, Greece, to name but a few.

She wanted to be a make-up artist on TV. Bit of a difference, eh?

Nicola, how did you hear about this job?
Oh, I was told about it. I applied and errrr… here I am!

I used to work in Boots the Chemist in Solihull. I did that for four years, working in the cosmetics department. I trained as a hairdresser and beautician. I also worked for Next for seven months.

How would you best describe yourself?
Hmmmm… bubbly, witty, friendly, probably a bit bossy! To do this job you *have* to get on with people. Communication's what it's all about.

What are the best bits of your job?
Ooooh… getting to meet different people (there are some nice Italians, let me tell you!) and dealing with the public. We get people calling with queries. I enjoy talking to them.

Any advice for budding PR people?
You've always got to come up with the goods. You gain respect if you send things promptly when people ask for them.

Oh, and no matter what you're feeling or thinking, always put on a brave face.

What do you think you'll be doing in five years' time?
I'll be a millionairess, lying in the Caribbean, just after a bank raid!



ANDREA GRIFFITHS

Andrea Griffiths is 27 and the PR Manager for **US Gold**'s console titles. She was born in Britain but her parents emigrated to Australia when she was a wee babe. She came back to Britain in June 1988.

She lists 'visiting unusual journalists' as one of her PR duties. Let's find out more…

So, Andrea, how did you get into PR?
It's funny, really, because I went for a job as a secretary, but in the interview convinced the company they needed someone in PR and I was the person for the job. The role was created for me! That's how I got into PR.

I started at US Gold in the Marketing department and moved into PR when the position became available. PR is very close to Marketing.

You've had other jobs apart from PR and Marketing jobs, though?
Oh, yes! I've been a presenter on local radio. I'm *still* a fitness instructor and I was employed at a special events agency in Australia, promoting bands.

Can you tell us what's involved in games PR?
[Thinks long and hard, has a suck on her Asda milk shake and says…] Dealing with the specialist press, games magazines etc. Collating information on forthcoming releases. Obtaining as much positive press and media coverage as possible. Being aware of new magazines and new TV programmes and making contact with them.

What sort of a person do you need to be to survive in a PR job?
You have to be bubbly, determined, efficient, pro-active and have loads of energy.

Oh, and this is very important — you have to get on with all types of people at all levels.

It can't all be plain sailing, surely?
No. Sometimes I have to deal with the odd one or two 'unprofessionals'. That's the worst bit of the job.

The best bit is seeing an excellent review in a magazine or on TV. I also like to think that what I do goes part of the way to helping US Gold titles become hits.

Have you a motto for someone considering going into PR?
Be persistent. Believe in yourself and sell yourself.

When you were younger, what job did you dream of doing?
I really wanted to be in a band.

What job do you dream of doing now?
[Thinks long and hard, has a nibble on her Asda salad roll and says with a smile…] Marketing Director! (Only joking, Andrew Chorzelski!)



TAMARA GRIMWOOD

Tamara Grimwood is 26 years of age. Like Stephen Whitaker, she's a Marketing Manager, but Tamara deals with all matters relating to the PC, Amiga and ST. She's been in her present position for two months.

What other positions have you held, Tamara?
I was Product Manager for a large powertools firm and Account Manager at an advertising agency.

Can you tell us your qualifications?
I've an Industrial Design degree and a Post Graduate/Chartered Institute Marketing diploma.

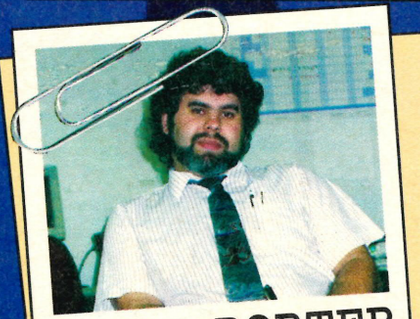
Is Marketing a hectic job?
Indeed it is. You have to be adaptable and incredibly organised. The ability to juggle your workload is essential, due to the sheer number of things there are to do.

You have to have strength of purpose, rely on other people and work closely as a team. I know that sounds a bit clichéd, but it's true.

What rewards are there in Marketing?
I agree with Steve, seeing ideas you had take shape. Seeing a product through from start to finish.

And the bad bits?
Having 50 million things to do and only having two days to do them!

And the future? Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
Hmmmm… five years is an awfully long time in Marketing.



TONY PORTER

Tony Porter is 29. He's **US Gold**'s Software Development Manager. This bloke knows his stuff. He's always been in the software industry and talks enthusiastically about what the future holds for us gamers.

Tony, what do you think the industry will be like in five years' time?
It will be *so* different. Every three or four years, the software industry changes. At the moment, we're just tapping into the potential of CD machines. In five years' time, CD entertainment will be very different. It will be deeper, more interactive, players will feel as though they're playing a part in a movie.

Tell us about your role as Software Development Manager.
I oversee everything. All the game schedules, designs, development and testing. I'm here to see a project from conception to completion.

What do you need in the way of qualifications?
There's no substitute for experience. You can't go up to a university graduate and expect him to know what to do. To carry out a job like mine, you have to work your way up from a games programmer.

I started work at Gremlin. I was a programmer for six years — I programmed the Z80 versions of *Gauntlet*. I've been involved in several US Gold hits. I programmed the first Sega version of *Gauntlet* for US Gold.

Good God! You know, I've programmed eleven versions of *Gauntlet* in my time!

What are the key qualities you possess in order to carry out your role?
I've got to be thick-skinned! People are never happy. It's the ability to balance my workload and make sure the stuff I give out is presentable and I don't ignore anybody. When a product's late, or below standard, I have to take the flak.

I have to motivate my staff — things can get pretty taxing when we're on deadline. I've got to ensure a product's of the highest quality.

What are the best bits of your job?
The variety. I'm always involved in different things. New technology is always exciting. There's one thing about this industry: it never stays the same.

When we visited Bridgett Hirst, Product Communications Manager, she'd just celebrated a birthday. 'I'm 21 again,' she insisted.

Bridgett's been Product Communications Manager since May. 'I was Product Manager before.

What qualifications do you hold?
I've got 13 'O' levels [to which there are screeches of '13?!' '13?!' around the office), an ONC and a HND in Business.

How did you get your job at US Gold?

ucts. We try and get as much good coverage as we possibly can.

What are the worst elements of your job?
When a product starts to slip and, errrr… Adrian Pitt [she can't mean it. I only live down the road! — Ade].

Just down the road and around the corner from **US Gold**'s HQ lie the offices which house the US Gold Helpline staff and game testers.

Steve Mann is boss-cocky at the Helpline; two other members of staff man the phones, Monday

The best bit of the job is helping someone through a game they've been stuck on for ages.

Any times when things go wrong?
I'd say when there's insufficient information from companies



BRIDGETT HIRST

They just stuck in another word!'

Andrea deals with the console side of things, what's *your* role?
I'm involved with all 16-bit specialist magazines; Amiga, PC and CD-ROM. I also deal with all the relevant TV programmes. I visit the magazines and take cakes! We're nice here.

Through a recruitment agency. I've been here two years.

What other jobs have you had?
I used to work in accountancy recruitment… That's *after* the trapeze artist job and a period as Harrison Ford's stunt double — hence the reason I look after all the Lucasarts games!

How would you describe yourself?
'Patient but occasionally fiery' just about sums me up! I *have* to be patient in this job — I work long hours. I have to get on well with people and be knowledgeable about all the products I'm assigned.

Do you enjoy seeing journalists at the magazines?
Yes, I enjoy meeting people and getting good coverage of US Gold prod-

What words of advice would you give someone who wants to embark on a similar career?
Endurance and dedication. Once you get your foot in the door, you can climb the ladder. This is a fast-moving industry.

Did you always want to be a Product Communications Manager?
No, I wanted to be a horticulturist — that's a stuck-up culturist [haughty culturist! Geddit?! —Ed].

Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
In the same position, although, if you can understand, I won't be doing the same job. There are *so* many new machines coming out — CDi, 3DO etc. My job will be very different in five years' time.



ROB PALFREMAN

Rob Palfreman is 24 and has been Games Tester since February. More than likely, Rob's cast his beady eye over all the latest **US Gold** games you've bought.

What qualifications are needed to do a job like Rob's? We ask the man who used to dress up as a rabbit…

What's this about the rabbit, then?
Oh, it's just one of my many weird and wacky jobs. I used to dress up in a rabbit costume to get punters into this toy shop [strange looks from everyone in the office as if to say, 'Oh yeah! Pull the other one!']. Honest. It's true!

I've also worked in a film processing plant, a pork pie factory and I've been a bouncer in Telford.

So what makes a good tester? Do you necessarily have to be a good gamesplayer?
Not really. It helps to have a good gamer and a bad gamer see a product. A bad gamer will do things wrong. They'll die in all the wrong places and that's where the bugs may occur. Game producers only test a game how it's *supposed* to be played.

What's involved in testing?
I have to find all the faults and bugs I can and suggest game improvements. I have to have an eye for detail, a good memory and be completely trustworthy.

How did you get your job?
I worked at a floppy disk duplicators — we used to duplicate US Gold disks. I met someone from the company and they suggested I apply.

I'd advise anyone who wants to get into this line of work to learn more about the software industry as a whole, not just know about games.

What are the rewards of your job?
Completing a game and seeing a game I've tested get good reviews.

And the downside?
Seeing a product get bad reviews.
Did you always want to do a job like this?
I never knew what job I'd end up doing, I just wanted to make loads of money.

Where do you go from here?
I'd like to stay in the industry and climb the career ladder.



STEVE MANN

to Friday, between 9am and 5.30pm, answering questions and game queries on all US Gold titles on all machines.

Steve is 25 years old and has been at the Helpline for 18 months.

Steve, tell us about your job.
Well, I'm the Technical Support and Helpline Supervisor. I write the scripts for the recorded helplines we have. I oversee all aspects of the US Gold Helpline and answer gameplay questions.

I help out my staff if there are queries they can't deal with. I also test many RPGs and adventures.

Surely you have to know games inside out?
Yes. I'd say I know about 90% of all US Gold games inside out. I can answer almost any gameplay question. I play a game and finish it.

What are you like on the phone?
I have to be pleasant at all times, under all sorts of circumstances, even when someone's shouting at me.
Apart from being pleasant, what other qualities are essential?
Having a fast memory and being extremely technically-minded.

Do you get feedback from the people you help?
Oh yeah! We get letters thanking us for our assistance. People usually say how great the Helpline is and why don't other companies have one. US Gold is the only company who have this many staff involved in a customer service.

involved in producing stuff for us. Liaison has to be good at all times, especially if I'm giving out technical information. I need to know whether one piece of equipment is compatible with another, things like that.

If someone wants to be involved in a Helpline, what advice would you give?
Get your mates to test you while playing games. Get them to ask you, 'How do you get past this bit?' etc etc. You've got to be very good with people and extremely patient.

When you were little, what job did you want to do?
A zoologist. A palaeontologist, as a matter of fact!

And the future?
I want to be a software producer. Oh, and I'd like to write my own roleplaying game.

Can you give us the US Gold Helpline number?
Yes, sure. If you've a gameplay or technical query on any US Gold product, you can phone us on 021 326 6418. There are four lines in total and remember, we're here Monday to Friday, 9 to 5.30.

From big, beautiful Birmingham to the dizzy heights of Warwickshire, next month we speak to the cosmic guys 'n' girls at Codemasters. How the company got off the ground, what the Codies staff get up to, where game ideas come from and what the future holds for the one of the brightest, most dynamic companies in the console world – it's all here next ish. Stay tuned.

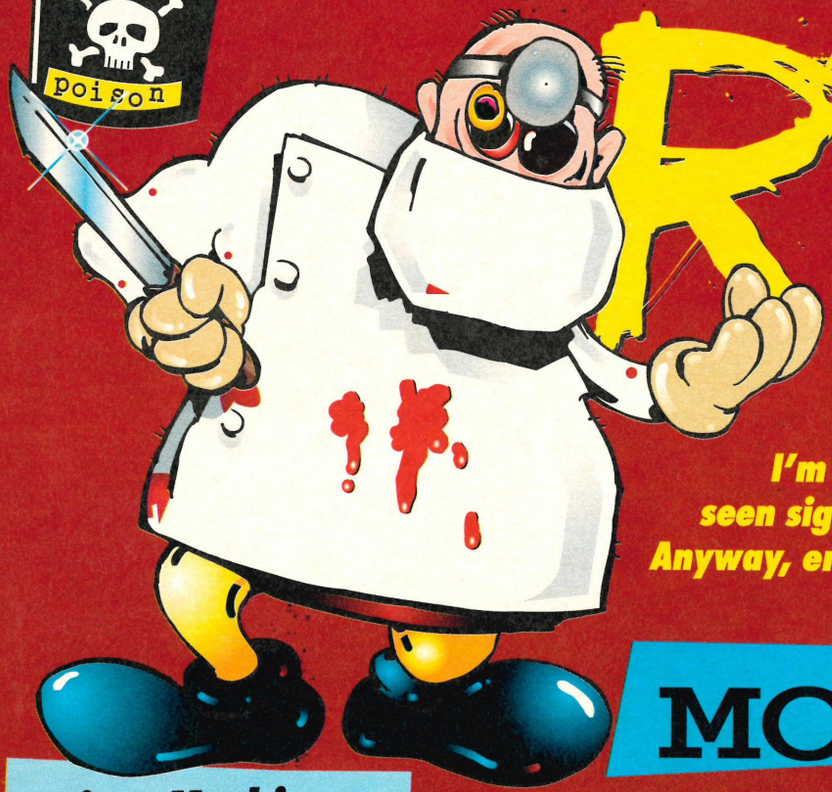
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Playing Tips

poison

DR. RUTHLESS

He's wild, he's crazy, he's a complete nutter… and he works for a different Mega Drive mag! Sadly, we're stuck with the useless Dr Ruthless to provide our tips and playing guides. Luckily, he's got enough brains to offer decent reader bribes…



Welcome for the first time to MEGA MACHINES' Tips Clinic, the place to visit if you've a bad case of Tiphtheria, inflamed cheats etc. I'm Doctor Ruthless and I have the messy job of sorting poor gamers out. I've seen sights that would make even the most hardened tipster heave into a bucket. Anyway, enough of the pleasantries, it's time to open the Clinic and attend to the first patient.

MORTAL MAYHEM!

Micro Machines

Richard Williams has sent in a great tip for this miniature racer. On race eight, Bermuda Bath, there's a yellow tube near the end of the circuit. Instead of going through it, go around the left-hand side. If successful, you'll go out of the screen and end up halfway around the track on the next lap. It doesn't always work so keep trying.

Fatal Fury

This game is a violent affair but you can minimalise your wounds if you follow the advice of Tim Foote from New Milton.

When the continue screen appears and you've no credits, rapidly press [A], [B] and [C] at the same time, while rotating the D-pad. A credit should appear — press Start and you're off! Repeat this cheat to obtain infinite continues.

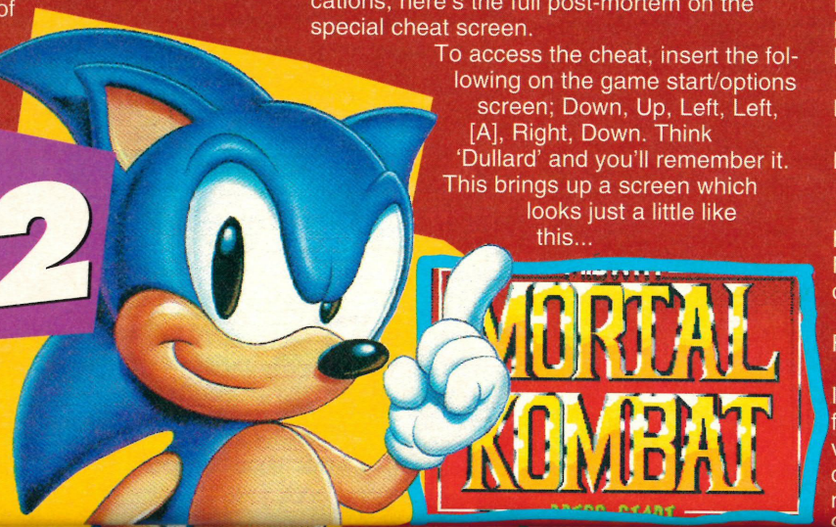
MEGA-LO-MANIA

A lot of people suffer from this but Andy Hughes from Oldham has sent in an unusual cheat to relieve the symptoms. For a hidden game of Asteroids, simply enter JOOLS on the password screen.

SONIC 2

Adam Cook from New Milton has sent in a healthy supply of tips, starting with that spiky blue thing that rushes around everywhere.

To construct you own levels, go to the options screen and go to the sound test and play the fol-



Emergency! The St John's Ambulance team have been roaring through the streets, sirens blaring, to rush in this top priority cheat for *Mortal Kombat*. For all of you suffering complications, here's the full post-mortem on the special cheat screen.

To access the cheat, insert the following on the game start/options screen; Down, Up, Left, Left, [A], Right, Down. Think 'Dullard' and you'll remember it. This brings up a screen which looks just a little like this...

Now, let's have a look at those flags, shall we? By toggling them, the following cheats are activated:

Flag 0:	Kills player two after one hit
Flag 1:	Kills player one after one hit
Flag 2:	Makes various objects float across the moon in the pit. Spooky!
Flag 3:	Makes some ugly chap's head float across the moon in the pit
Flag 4:	Reptile Man appears before each fight, offering cryptic advice on how to meet him.
Flag 5:	Infinite credits
Flag 6:	Computer opponent performs death move every time it beats you
Flag 7:	Makes the game extremely hard

In order to face Reptile Man, I prescribe the following: In the pit, perform a double-flawless victory and a death move, without blocking once. This means Scorpion and Sonya cannot meet him in combat.

Oh dear.

BLOOD MONEY!

Have you got unused tips lying around the house that could be of use at the Clinic? Why not send them into the Tips Clinic? Every month, the best tip, map, set of codes or players' guide wins the sender the cart of their choice from the Top Ten. So get your tips material flowing in, or if a particular game ails you, tell me your problem. That all-important address is: DOCTOR RUTHLESS, TIPS CLINIC, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow SY8 1JW.

lowing tunes: 01, 09, 09, 02, 01, 01, 02, 04, then press and hold Start. In the game, [B] switches Sonic, [A] cycles through the sprites and [C] places it on the scenery.

For the same effect but also 14 continues, go to options then the sound test and play 19, 65, 09, 17, 01, 01, 02, 04.



BATMAN RETURNS

Batman's a sickly superhero at the moment — a chunky villain called Bane has broken his spine! Fans who're having trouble keeping the Caped Crusader in one piece can try this tip from Tony Whiteside.

On Act 1, Section 2 (The Abandoned Building), find where the weapons are hidden and when you come to the second head, instead of kicking it to block up the suckers, let yourself be sucked in and blown out again at the beginning of the level. Repeat this move a few times until you've a handy supply of extremely powerful weapons. This is time consuming but a massive help.

Another handy tip is at the end of Level 5. If you get lucky and defeat The Penguin, take great care because just when you think you've finished the game, Catwoman makes her final appearance and must be defeated while the credits are rolling.

ROAD RASH II

Now I know from experience there are a lot of people experiencing problems with Road Rash, but an unknown specialist from Leamington Spa has the perfect tip.

If your having trouble defeating adversaries, you can seriously kick their bottoms by entering the code 009N IV00 (the 0s are zeroes, not letters) on the 'SET PASSWORDS' option. You're now the owner of Wild Thing 2000, the meanest two-wheeler around.

BUBSY

Always beware of bobcats, they can give a nasty bite if you startle them, and if it turns septic... Anyway MD Parkes of Nottingham has sent some Action Replay codes for that little feline runaway.

FF023B0008	Infinite lives
FF00E90055	Freeze timer
FF00900004	Invincibility
FF02470025	Lots of yarnballs (change last two digits to increase yarnballs)

OLYMPIC GOLD

Anyone suffering from a deficiency of Olympic Gold tips? Here's one from Gavin Morris, but be warned, it can only be achieved by people already taking a slow motion joypad supplement.

Before the start of the 100m, hammer and hurdles, switch your joypad to 'slow'. This enables you to run the 100m in 8 sec 50 and throw 91 metres in the hammer.

SUPER HANG ON

Here's an ideal serum for Super Hang On addicts out there, sent in by Wayne Turner from Dartford.

When the title screen appears, press and hold down [A], [B] and [C]. Press Start for an options menu and select Password. Enter the following for lots of money, the start of the third level and the best frame, tyres etc:

5DA3F546A35514
B9NQINIMBAFEHL

JUNGLE STRIKE

My fire button thumb's given me plenty of gip over the past few months, 'thanks' to Electronic Arts' multi-vehicle blaster. *Other* doctors have the nerve to nickname this injury 'Nintendo-itis'! Ben Turner of Cardiff relieves the symptoms.

Sub Attack

While attacking nuclear subs, don't blow the hell out of them with rockets and your chain gun, simply lay two mines in front of them while they're still moving.

Training Ground

When rescuing the communications expert, it's handy to know that just above and right of the camp is a Sheridan tank containing an all-important extra life.

Snow Fortress

This level's a toughy. When collecting Wild Bill, only save a maximum of five people — this way you can collect the Soviet General without having to drop anyone at the LZ, surrounded by those ugly, bruising Abrams tanks.

If you still find yourself shot down with alarming speed, just above the power grid is a small hut containing a glorious extra life to help you cream this level.

River Raid

The hardest part is Mission 5 because it's so difficult to blow up the fuel tanks without smashing into hard metal. Destroy the Sheridan tanks which surround the fuel and continue the level until you transfer back to you chopper. Now head back to the depot and kick ass properly!

Mountains

Not much for this level, except after take-off, head straight across to the right where you should find two pyramids, one of which contains a fast ladder.

Jungle Night

Before taking off, look at the map — there should be a clearing down the left-hand side which forms an 'L' shape at the base. Head toward it, blow up the small building and collect the enemy dude who gives you the locations of fuel and ammo. This level should now be a cinch!

GENERAL TIPS

Abrams

When attacking these mean machines, edge toward them very slowly, firing your chain gun. If all goes to plan, you can position yourself so you destroy the tank without it making a move.

Buildings

If you're attacking an unguarded building while low on ammo and armour, you can smash into it as many times as you want and your armour won't drop below five points. You can get a good look in as many unguarded buildings as you want without firing a pea!

Codes

Sub Attack RL4Z3B9WHZD	Snow Fortress....WSGBTSHGK9G
Training Ground 9VSJKV74PJK	River Raid.....TMFKRTL4SPP
Jungle Night XT6DYXTLHZF	Mountains 7GZXTGJFDBS
Pulso City VNHJD39VSPH	Return Home NZXWSD3BRWY

Try out this cool cheat sent from Robert Sergent of Ormskirk. First go to the password screen and enter VNMCFKRX4ND. You start on Level 5 with 22 lives and keep them. Even when you enter a password after Level 5 you'll have 22 lives.

RJ Beaton has a nifty code, too. For 14 lives, the choice of *any* co-pilot and 91,236,000 points, simply enter B46PJRWT7YT.

JUNGLE STRIKE

Playing Tips poison

SHADOW DANCER

Richie Smith from Leicester has a cheat to prevent lacerated limbs and put a smile on your face.

For the opportunity to try any of *Shadow Dancer*'s tough areas, wait until the title screen appears and simultaneously press buttons [A], [B] and [C]. Press Start and a Stage Practice option appears on the menu screen.

To gain 200,000 bonus points each time you kill a boss, attack until his defence is down to the last one or two flames then dodge his attacks until the clock starts the ten-second countdown. When it reaches the last second, use your magic and you're rewarded with 200,000 points. This doesn't work on the last boss.

Last password: !AYASAM!

ALIEN 3

To activate the stage skip, go to the options screen and press [C], Up, Right, Down, Left, [A], Right, Down, using pad two. During the game you can skip levels by pressing Start [C], [A], [B].



CYBORG JUSTICE

For anybody having trouble with acute Cyborg Justice, why not follow these tips for a better game? Thanks go to ambitious orderly Natalie Frigieri of Edinburgh.

First construct your cyborg and enter the game itself. Pause it then quickly press [C], [B], [B], [C], [C], [A], [C], [B]. If you've done this correctly, a new options screen appears. It may take a few attempts so persevere. When the cheat's activated, you can change weapons, select levels, get extra lives etc.

HUMANS

They didn't have proper medical treatment in prehistoric times, y'know, just the odd poultice and mammoth-skin bandage. If your caveman aren't making it through the night, here are codes for a few of the later levels:

41	HQVQNQVMVGPQ
50	PDJRKPCTYXDK
60	YNTBXYJYNWLK
70	VWPKNRSXXYTY
80	XPMNWJKFNQZC

CHAKAN

Game Genie

This geezer doesn't need medical assistance — an enchantment means he'll live forever! You mortals, however, might like to make use of these Game Genie codes.

AKZATA7L	Protection from most hits
RLGATA4C	Invincibility (apart from falls)
AB3ATCF2	Longer invincibility after hit
POATXTVR	Start with four blue potions
OPATXTVW	Start with four green potions
POATXTV0	Start with four red potions
POATXTV4	Start with four clear potions
RGJAW600	Super jump
ACGTVE7W	Infinite time
RGRAW604	Grappling hook always available
RGRAW61N	Battering mallet always available
RGRTW6T6	Battle axe always available

ECCO: THE DOLPHIN

Sorry, no fish — I only treat mammals (dolphins are mammals, dummy! —Ed). Er... heh-hey! Lovely Ecco codes for all you dolphin fans. Wonderful creatures, they are.

1 Undercaves	WEFIDNMP
2 The Vents	BHEBLFBE
3 The Lagoon	ERYELFBO
4 Ridge Water	DQYDUREJ
5 Open Ocean	JJDPVREA
6 Ice Zone	PVGEYREN
7 Hard Water	XAOAYREE
8 Cold Water	UQYVXREV
9 Island Zone	UYUZUREP
10 Deep Water	ZYYGVRER
11 Marble Sea	RMXKXREC
12 Library	VGSOXREZ
13 Deep City	TUIHXREU
14 City of Forever	IROSXREX
15 Jurassic Beach	FXMTAPEA
16 Pteranodon Pond	JXFXAPEB
17 Origin Beach	PVABBPEF
18 Triobite Circle	GGUEBPEE
19 Dark Water	BSOIBPEJ
20 Deep Water	UARSQOEL
21 City of Forever	POZJGPLR
22 Home of Ecco	No code
23 Tuke	VDHGKLS
24 Welcome to the machine	CSOCKMLR

SPEEDBALL 2

If you want to stay healthy, I can't recommended this violent sport — more broken limbs, lacerations and dizzy spells than a Gazza's local pub! Get on the ball with these cool tips from Colin Alley of Belfast.

Start by boosting the power of attackers to maximum then improving the defence. If you have any money left, spend it on midfield.

Start the match and collect as many coins as you can. If you run out of money as the game goes on, concentrate on spending your meagre funds on SPD, ATT, STA and DEF.

New Players

Second Division: Attack
Gazza: Fast and strong, possibly the best player in the second division
Second Division: Midfield
Roscoff: A bit like Gazza, actually
First Division: Attack
Jams: The best player. Buy him as soon as you can then watch your scoring rate go up
First Division: Midfield
Mandrake: This bloke's fast and powerful but useless in the second division, for some reason.

Opening Moves

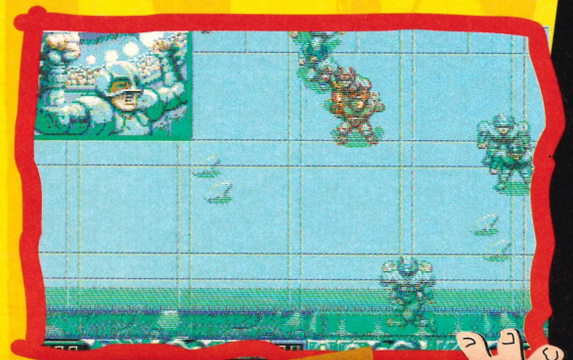
- When the ball comes up, grab it and throw it to your right winger then towards the opposition's goal. By this time your centre-forward should be near the goal. As the ball comes toward him, slide and you take the keeper's legs away.
- Grab the ball and run to the right of the computer's centre-forward. Keep going and go between the two defenders. Throw the ball to the keeper, tackle him, then throw the ball in the open goal.

Best Team

- Super Naswan — don't mess with these guys if you want to keep your players in one piece.

Miscellaneous

- Shoot the ball at the electron bouncers at about 45 degrees and you should get it to bounce straight into the goal.
- If the ball ends up in your keeper's hands, don't clear it straight away. Throw a high ball straight up the pitch to your fastest player and while you're waiting for everyone else to catch up, collect coins. When you're bored, just score.



COOL SPOT

Not even prescription-only spot creams can help you with this game. Another unnamed tipster, this time all the way from deepest York, has sent a cool tip.

Press Start to pause it then [A], [B], [C], [B], [A], [C], [A], [B], [C], [B], [A], C. This enables you to skip the whole level. Repeat this cheat to skip through the whole game and view the end sequence.

Mr M Fields from West Bromwich has these medicinal level-by-level *Cool Spot* tips.

Level 1 To find the exit, simply follow the hands and collect the spots. Don't forget clocks give you an extra 30 seconds of time.

When you get to the exit, don't shoot the lock, instead jump onto the balloon where you'll find lots of spots and sometimes an extra clock.

Level 2 To find the exit, just keep heading right.

Level 3 This level has lots of enemies on it. When the hands point the way, go in the opposite direction to find some good things. If you look behind some pipes you'll find spots.

Level 4 This is the hardest level of the game. When you come to the rocket section above the bath tub, you find flying saucers. It's very hard to jump off these so jump straight away instead of dying. The exit's at the top-right again.

Level 5 The level's exit is at the top-right again.

Level 6 There's an extra life at the bottom-left of this level.

Level 7 This exit is at the top-right again.

Level 8 The exit is at the top-right of this level.

Level 9 The exit's at the bottom-right.

Level 10 This exit's at the top-right of the level.

Level 11 The exit's at the top.

SHERLOCK HOLMES CD

He of the deerstalker hat and big pipe didn't have to worry with Doctor Watson at his side. Lucky Mega-CD owners can give these passwords a spin:

- **TIN SOLDIER:** Pierre Arreau
- **MUMMY'S CURSE:** Phillip Travis
- **MURDERESS:** Lorretta Nole



AFTER BURNER II

J Brant from Watford has sent in the perfect cure for anybody suffering from a severe lack of Mega Drive tips. First on the list is a cheat for a painful-sounding of *After Burner II*.

To select a level (1–20), press [A], [B], [C] and Start. When you reach maximum speed, tap the speed button twice for an extra burst.

For a hundred missiles, press the following...

Stage 3	Left + [B]	Stage 13	Left + [B]
Stage 5	Right + [B]	Stage 16	Right + [B]
Stage 9	Left + [B]	Stage 21	Left + [B]
Stage 11	Right + [B]		

BULLS VS LAKERS

Go to the finals with these codes:

Bulls 3 Suns 1	KXOVPBBB
Lakers 3 Pistons 1	DBOBPBBC
Blazers 3 Celtics 0	DBOBPBBC
Utah Jazz 3 Bucks 0	WVOB5BBB
Bucks 3 Blazers 0	CDOBFBBB
Celtics 3 Lakers 1	DNOZPBBB
Rockets 3 76'ers 0	120BFBBB
Spurs 3 Hawks 0	IGOBFBBB
Hawks 3 Lakers 0	T40BFBBB
Suns 3 Bulls 1	ZOV5BBB

OUT PATIENTS

They're cured! In this department of the Tips Clinic we wave goodbye to fond friends – games which can stand the rigours of the outside world without surgical support or daily injections in the rear end. These carts should be completely disease-free, but may return for a check-up in six months or so.

GOLDEN AXE II

Have a go at this hazardous-sounding game with the aid of this handy tip from Richie Smith of Leicester. Proceed to any end-of-level boss with at least one magic box. During your fight with the boss, press and hold button [A] (not using the magic box).

Finish him off while still holding [A] then release it when the thieves begin to move. Let them steal your magic box but don't get any yourself.

When your character reappears on the next level, they'll automatically use a magic spell (even though you don't have any magic boxes). Afterwards, two rows of magic boxes appear across the bottom of the screen.

Use limitless magic, but don't overcharge or the game freezes.

While the intro screen rolls, press and hold buttons [A], [B] and [C] and press Start. Continue to hold button [A] but release [B] and [C], then press them again to enter the options screen.

Continue to hold button [A], but release [B] and [C]. Select Exit on the option screen and while still holding [A], simultaneously press [B] and [C] to return to the main menu. Continue to hold [A] but release the other buttons..

Still holding [A], press [B] and [C] at the same time to choose the number of players. Continue to hold all three buttons and press Start to choose the normal game.

While holding all three buttons, highlight your character, press Up and Start. Now choose any level (phew!).



JAMES POND 2: CODENAME ROBOCOD

For invincibility, leap on the roof of the toy factory at the beginning of the game and grab the items in this order: Cake, Hammer, Earth, Apple, Tap (to spell CHEAT). To get infinite lives, enter the first door of the castle and move right until you pass the second set of spikes. Pick up the items in this order: Lips, Ice cream, Violin, Earth, Snowman (spelling LIVES).

HARD DRIVIN'

If you can't beat the Phantom on the stunt track, why not challenge him on the speed track? All you have to do is turn left instead of going straight on. You'll blast over the turn signs and head straight into battle with the Phantom on the speed track.

THE IMMORTAL

Become immortal (well, not quite) with these handy level codes sent to the Clinic by James Crombie of Ireland.

Level	Code
4	465FA31001EB0
5	D4BFD41000EB0
6	BCFEF51010ACL
7	6B10F61010ACL
8	E590D710178C1

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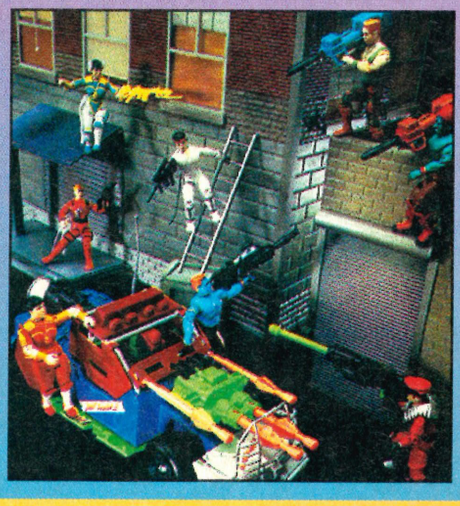
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.....
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P&P
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Please tick here if you do not wish to receive other mailings ☐

Playing Tips poison

STREETS OF RAGE II

Robert Lee has a cool cheat for the game based on a day in Ludlow. This cheat enables you to select the same player in two-player mode (you'll need two joypads to get it to work).

Hold down button [B] and Right on joypad one and [A] and Left on the second joypad when the title screen appears. Keeping them held down, press button [C] on joypad two.

Keep everything held down, then when the option screen comes up (one or two players, Duel and option screen), release everything. Choose the two-player game and you can select the same character.

THUNDER FORCE IV

This tip was also sent in by the unknown tipster from Leamington. This graphically stunning shoot-'em-up is a bit of a toughy but if you use this cheat for infinite ammunition your enemies won't know what's hit them.

Pause the game then press Up, [A], Down, Right, [A], [C], Left, Up, [B] and finally Up. You should have a full arsenal of weapons to help reduce the amount of continue screens.

GLOBAL GLADIATORS

Now a small but potent dose of tips for the dynamically green duo. To get infinite lives, press [A], [B], [C], [B], [A], [C], [A], [B], [C], [B], [A], [C] when the Virgin logo's displayed.

To skip a stage, pause the game and press [B], [C], [B], [A], [B], [B], [C], [B], [A], [B]. In any stage, press Start, enter the cheat and press Start again to jump forward a sub-section; just keep doing it to complete a world.

JOHN MADDEN '93

Here's an odd tip sent in by master surgeon Ed 'Pink Floyd' Lomas for the classic American Football sim. Simply choose a passing play and line up. Snap the ball using [C] and immediately press button [A]. Your quarterback should put the ball down and do a little dance for you!! He'll get sacked and you'll lose a few yards but it's quite funny. If you watch the replay it's even weirder – your quarterback's just shown as loads of frames of animation!!

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

Little Arthur's second outing is a lot of fun but gets tough, so remember to get a full heart check-up before you tackle this spooky cheat.

To become invincible, go to the options screen four times, then on the title screen press [A], [A], [A], [A], Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, [B], Start.

To play in slow motion, press Up, [A], Down, [A], Left, [A], Right, [A] on the title screen – you should hear a bong. Hold down start till Arthur appears, pause the game and hold down [B].

TINY TOON ADVENTURES

Tiny Toons? Never mind, size isn't important. To beat Buster's buddy bosses, under the min-bending influence of Dr Gene Splicer, red on...

Boss 1: Dizzy Devil



Make Gene Splicer drop his remote control by jumping on his head. Jump to the top of the trees and back down to land on his head. Dodge Dizzy Devil and this boss is no problem.

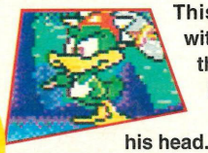
Boss 2: Calamity Coyote



Again, jump on Gene's head. This time, however, Calamity Coyote's throwing bombs.

Jump to the far-right platform, where Calamity's bombs won't hit you. Every time Gene pops out of the waterwheel crates, jump on his head. Do this a few times to beat him. Easy.

Boss 3: Plucky Duck



This time you fight Plucky Duck, armed with a Stone Age axe which he smacks on the floor, dislodging rocks from the roof. Dodge the rocks and when Gene swoops down in his aeroplane, jump on his head. Repeat this procedure to beat him.

Boss 4: Toxic Revenger



Plucky Duck strikes back as the Toxic Revenger, flying through pipes in the walls. Gene's on a platform in the middle. Climb and drop from platforms, alternating between left and right, jumping on Gene's head as you do so. Repeat until beaten.

Boss 5: Montana Max



This is the first time you meet Montana Max, after a long battle through a pirate ship. He isn't difficult: all you have to do is keep jumping on his head until his helmet cracks, then you get the treasure.

Boss 6: Hampton Pig



Yawn, yawn. This time it's Hampton Pig with a vacuum cleaner. He sucks up snow and fires it at you. Just dodge it and hit Gene when he comes near.

Boss 7: Elmyra



Dodge Elmyra at all costs. If she gets too close, jump over her; if she turns around, jump over her again. Take it slow and keep jumping her and you'll eventually reach the end of the level.



Boss 8: Montana Max

The final boss is Montana Max again, but this time he dives into a big robot (move over, Doc Robotnik!). He fires three lasers so you have to be nimble.

The rest is up to you. If you get this far, you'll soon develop a winning tactic and defeat RoboMax

The Waiting Room

Unfortunately, not every tip that's sent in can be used, so here's a name-check for those people who took the trouble to send something but are still in the waiting room, reading a seven-year-old copy of Woman's Own.

A big thank you to: Rick 'Sonic Cheats' Mills, Greg Neil (from Toad Hall?), Craig Dunlop, Alan Burness, Dale Philips, Austin Dyson, LM Buckley (for even more of those *Jungle Strike* tips), Mark Reeves, John Allan (who suffered from *Flashback*, Richard Avery, Alan Thomas, RA Baines (for his cartography skills), Aaron Seddon, J Knight, Stewart Topping, N Bailey, Terry Hughes, Miss S Leary (who suffered *another Flashback*), Jungle-Striking Peter Russel, David and Christopher (for some Sonic stuff), Paul Haine and his tips and cheats, Jonathan Frascella, Jenny, Liz and James, Paul Fletcher, Glen Burbidge, Philip Sumner (for his Sonic guide), Chris Battenbough, Jason Jackson, Danny Jeffreys, Keith Robinson, Tom Boyle, Kevin S Saunderson, Dave, Neil Turnball, Paul Jones and last, but certainly not least, Paul Farley for a stack of Sonic cheats.

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Playing Tips poison

FLASHBACK



Combat

Always have your gun ready when you enter a room. Sometimes it's best to roll in.

Against jungle aliens, stay down and fire fast; if you get too close, stand up and hit them with your gun. Floating guards can take a few shields off you. Fire a few times then use your force field. Repeat until they die.

Timing is essential. When jumping to another platform, think carefully whether a small leap or big jump is needed.

Try to remember where energy generators are, you may need to rush back if you have few or no shields left. On later levels, when you have a teleport receiver and control, you may find it handy to leave the receiver at a generator so you can warp back whenever necessary. Always pick up your receiver after use — you won't get far without it.

Nearly every room has a puzzle or battle so think hard before trying something. Check every platform, you may find something. Even a stone will help you. Make your inventory as large as you can and when stuck, check it — you could have the solution without even knowing it.

Level 1

Before anything else, go down and collect the holocube — even though you know what it says, you can't get far without it.

Go right and up, kill the small robots and the jungle alien at the far right (near the bottom of the screen). Go down, left and pick up the stone. Go back right and kill the jungle alien and robot. The alien drops a cartridge — take it and go down.

To the left is a cartridge lock which needs a fully-magnetised cartridge to make a bridge, taking you further left. To magnetise your cartridge, go right, to a generator.

If you go left, up and right, you see a man who needs help. To find his teleporter, go back to the lock, put your cartridge in and go left. Wander about to the left and you find a cave.

Go up and you'll see a lift which you can't stand on. Wrong! Put your stone down on the small machine to the right. The lift stays down, allowing you to collect the teleporter. Go back to the man who needs help, give him his teleporter and in return you get an ID card.

The rest is easy. Go back past the cartridge lock, down and right, collecting a key and credits. Go back near the cave, down, open the ID lock and kill the alien. Hang down and drop.

Continue right and buy a belt off the old man, then jump down the hole. The belt costs $500 and you should have $650. See if the old man gives you 150 back!

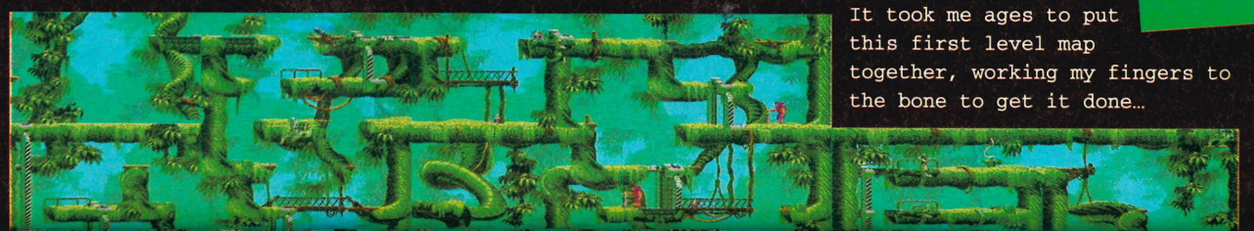
Level 2

After finding Ian and going to Jack (to the right of the bar), you're set five missions. Remember where everything is and talk to whoever you can.

In the second mission you can only go right and down. Once or twice you must leave the VIP on his own.

Go right then down until you find a lift. Go left and continue until you're in a room with two hovering robots. Keep your distance and destroy one at a time.

Collect the key on the top platform then go right again and put the key in a lock (you should've used a key before entering the hovering robot room). Collect the VIP and go down the lift between two doors, which had been closed. Go left and you've completed the second mission.



It took me ages to put this first level map together, working my fingers to the bone to get it done...

Level 3

Look for lifts and go up at every opportunity, a total of seven climbs. Look for switches and kill whoever you can. It doesn't take long to get to the top.

Levels 4 & 5

These take a while but keep cool and follow your instincts. On Level 5 you collect the teleport receiver and control — you need them frequently on the last level.

Level 6b

To kill the auxiliary brain, stand up, fire a few shots and get down. Repeat until it dies.

Throw your receiver down the hole and warp down. Go left until you come to a lift which previously blocked a door. Go down and right.

To kill the *master* brain, go in and kill the blob men, stand on the left ledge and shoot to the right. After one shot, go back down and kill the next batch of blobs. Go straight to the right ledge and shoot left. Repeat until it dies.

You'll hear doors on the right open. Go up the lift and collect the exploding mouse to make a blob man appear. Go right, kill him and he drops a key to open the lock.

Go down and right. Leave the atomic charge and press the switch. The charge falls down and you're up against time.

Go back where the master brain was, continue left and go up then right. When you can't get any further, go to a grey platform and press [A].

Now sit back and watch some great end-of-game graphics...

Codes

Level 1: Falcon
Level 2: Data
Level 3: Milord
Level 4: Quickly
Level 5: Bijou
Level 6b: Bubble, clip
End sequence: Cygnus

ARNOLD PALMER'S TOURNAMENT GOLF

Take over a hundred shots (guaranteed immunity!) on any one game. On the Game Over screen, press [A], [B], [C] and Up to enter a mini version of Fantasy Zone.
Try the code OMHE2VfC4gVUraO UjdqKUD6vygcUAAur-bgv or all fs on the top line and 9s on the bottom.

SUPER WRESTLEMANIA

A super-fit cheat for this wrestling epic was sent by Damian Walker from Edinburgh and allows you to win every time.
First leave the ring and go to the bottom – your opponent will follow. When your opponent reaches the bottom, he'll run at you. Just drop-kick him, give him a couple of elbow-drops and get back in the ring before you're counted out as well.

CYBERBALL

Just try out the password 65BB BX11 BFEX to reach the Superbowl, or ESRA EMOS KCIK for the Cyberbowl. To watch the end sequence, enter the code CGBBBSFBBB2V.

BATMAN RETURNS

Action Replay

The bandage-swathed Chuck has already received medical assistance yet still loses his head! Prevent further damage with the aid of these AR codes.

02EC9E6002	Immune to enemies
02B1666002	Walk on lava
02EC386004	Removes all enemies
02EB884E71	Infinite lives
02EB626002	Skips levels (activate switch until you're at required level)

GHOSTBUSTERS
Action Replay

An invisible man sleeping in your bed? Who ya gonna call? A psychiatrist. Or my good self, Dr Ruthless, who'll provide some exorcising AR codes.

014D306008	Lots of money
006D426004	Unlimited bombs
0088E26004	Infinite lives
FFFE2C0010	Unlimited life
FFFE32001A	Unlimited energy
FFFE0E00XX	Money x100 (0-99)
FFFE0F00XX	Money x1 (0-99)

DEATH DUEL

Action Replay

This cart's ultra-violent – and extremely crap! These AR codes might patch up a few wounds.

FFFF2F0087	Infinite time
FF268D0040	Infinite left side shots
FF26AF0040	Infinite centre shots
FF1F4F00XX	Level-select (XX is 0-10)
FFFF290005	Infinite tries
FFFF2F0099	Unlimited time
FFFF3AXXXX	Amount of Pheelae



…then the designer goes and shoves it in this little space! Ah well, at least he's agreed to become a blood donor (Heh, heh, heh!).

ALIEN 3

Stomach problems? Can't keep anything down? Help Ripley cleanse colonists' colons and wipe out gut-inhabiting Aliens with these armour-piercing Game Genie codes!

AACTCA6J	Infinite time
A2EAAA8R	Infinite lives
AJNAEA3R	Infinite machine gun ammo
AJMAEA7C	Infinite flame-thrower ammo
AJJTEA2J	Infinite grenade-gun ammo
AJKAEA88	Infinite hand grenades ammo
RG2TC6W4	Maximum energy on First Aid
AJFTAA66	Never lose radar
5DXAD93N	Ripley jumps higher
YDXAD93N	Ripley jumps much higher
AMDACA4J	Long falls don't reduce energy
ADEACAGJ	Falls into fans don't reduce energy
AJBTAAEY	Start on Stage 2
ANBTAAEY	Start on Stage 3
ATBTAAEY	Start on Stage 3 Guardian
AYBTAAEY	Start on Stage 4
A2BTAAEY	Start on Stage 5
A6BTAAEY	Start on Stage 6
BABTAAEY	Start on Stage 6 Guardian
BEBTAAEY	Start on Stage 7
BJBTAAEY	Start on Stage 8
BNBTAAEY	Start on Stage 9
BTBTAAEY	Start on Stage 9 Guardian
BYBTAAEY	Start on Stage 10
B2BTAAEY	Start on Stage 11
B6BTAAEY	Start on Stage 12
CABTAAEY	Start on Stage 12 Guardian
CEBTAAEY	Start on Stage 13
CJBTAAEY	Start on Stage 14
CNBTAAEY	Start on Stage 15
CTBTAAEY	Start on Stage 15 Guardian
SACTCADY	Clock runs slower
8ACTCADY	Clock runs much slower
NC2ACAG0	Machine-gun recharge reloads to maximum
NC2ACAHY	Flame-thrower recharge reloads to maximum
NL2TCAAW	Grenade-launcher recharge reloads to maximum
NW2TCABT	Hand grenade recharge reloads to maximum
D2CTCADY	Clock runs faster





Game Genie & Action Replay

A bat, a cat and a penguin – and a casualty ward-full of codes for both cheat carts! You really can win with these.

BLYTAA4R	Invincibility — unless you fall
ALFAAA9N	Infinite Batarangs
BLGTAA5N	Infinite smoke bombs
BLHTAA8C	Infinite swarms
BLJTAA4L	Infinite grappling guns
BLLAAA7A	Infinite super-seeking Batarangs
AKFAAAFT	Start with two swarms
CVFAAAFT	Start with 20 swarms
NPFAAAFT	Start with 99 swarms
CVFAAAFE	Start with 20 Batarangs
GKFAAAFE	Start with 50 Batarangs
NPFAAAFE	Start with 99 Batarangs
BEFAAABL	Start with ten liveS (shows '0' on display)
GEFAAABL	Start with 50 lives (shows '0')
KJFAAABL	Start with 75 lives (shows '0')
NTFAAABL	Start with 99 lives (shows '0')
A3FAAAFL	Start with six smoke bombs
CVFAAAFL	Start with 20 smoke bombs
NPFAAAFL	Start with 99 smoke bombs
AKFAAAF0	Start with two guns
CVFAAAF0	Start with 20 guns
NPFAAAF0	Start with 99 guns
AKFAAAF6	Start with two super bats
CVFAAAF6	Start with 20 super bats
NPFAAAF6	Start with 99 super bats
A9GACAD6	Start on Level 7
BDGACAD6	Start on Level 8
BHGACAD6	Start on Level 9
BMGACAD6	Start on Level 10
B1GACAD6	Start on Level 11
B9GACAD6	Start on Level 12
CDGACAD6	Start on Level 13
CSGACAD6	Start on Level 14
CXGACAD6	Start on Level 15
C1GACAD6	Start on Level 16
C5GACAD6	Start on Level 17
CHGACAD6	Start on Secret Level 1
CMGACAD6	Start on Secret Level 2
FFFE34000A	Infinite Batarangs
FFFE350003	Infinite smoke bombs
FFFE360003	Infinite bat swarms
FFFE370003	Infinite grappling hooks
FFFE380003	Infinite super Batarangs

Playing Tips
poison

SHINING force

I've got a shinin' force: the torch I use for examining ears. If you're stuck with this RPG (rather than a pint of wax), I can still help you. With thanks to Andrew Storr and Tracy Dean, let me tell you a story…



CHAPTER 1



After he woke, Main listened to what Varios had to say and walked through into his quarters. As he entered, so did Lowe from the other entrance. They talked for a while then Main went back out to see Varios. As they talked, a soldier arrived and spoke to Varios, who told Main to prepare for battle.

Varios left to see the King and Main went back to his quarters, where Lowe waited. They talked then split up to find out what was going on. Past the supply shop on the right was a wine bar, where Gort worked.

Main went to castle's top-right tower, just past the knights training area. On the top of the tower was an old man looking through a telescope.

Main went to the opposite end and looked through. 'A HUGE EYE.

friends die.

3. Stick together in twos and threes — don't get surrounded.
4. ALWAYS keep a mage and medic with the main character.
5. As soon as someone makes it to Level 11, retreat from battle and promote them.
6. A formation to use later in the game (you can modify it but STICK TOGETHER!):

Knight	Main	Knight
Mage	Medic	Mage
Medic	Knight	Medic
Archer	Dragon	Archer

They killed the goblins first, simply because they were the weakest. The Dark dwarves were more of a problem; sometimes they attacked twice.

When they encountered the Rune Knight, they surrounded him and attacked until he was dead. Lowe decided fighting wasn't his cup of tea and stuck behind Main from then on. As the knight died, he gloated how their homeland was being destroyed at that very moment.

Main spotted a little red house in the distance and headed straight for it, planning to rest and develop tactics. While he was there, he saw a man cutting wood, who was eager to join the Shining Force team. Main recruited him then visited the friar in the house; the holy man recorded their adventures and wished them

searched around and found treasure. He talked to everyone in the wine bar and met Khris, who warned him about meeting the king in the castle. It was all she dared say.

At the castle court room, the king acted strangely and asked Main to follow him. Main did and ran straight into a trap: in the bowels of the castle was Kane! He threw Main in prison with the friar.

After searching the cell for a while, Main examined the bars. He heard footsteps… It was Khris, who helped him escape and joined the Shining Force. As Main left, he recorded his story with the friar and walked into a fight.

In battle

1. Split up but make sure the teams are evenly balanced.
2. Kill bats first then the snipers and Dark Mage, who has Blaze 2 and attacks up to five people at once. Luckily, he doesn't move far.
3. In any battle, if your healer must raise levels, heal everyone. But if a monster has 1 HP left, use him to kill it.

After the fight, Main bought more supplies and recorded his story. He visited the King and was told about the dragons' land, near the entrance to the court room, on the left.





GENERAL TIPS

1. Keep your supplies topped up.
2. Get the best weapons possible.
3. Don't forget to equip your new weapons. Change them as much as possible.
4. Make sure you have healthy hit points.
5. When swapping characters, always choose the strongest for a new member.
6. When you meet Gong, there's a creature to the right. I haven't sussed out his role but it's something to do with the castle after the last battle of Chapter 1. I believe him to be Domingo.
7. Equip Ianri or Tao with the Mobility ring to create a mage with plenty of movement.
8. Search everywhere, you never know what you might find.
9. Dark Dragon has every attack spell in its strongest form.
10. In Alterone there's a women with a new dress. Push the cart into her then go and see her. She pushes you into the water, where you can get a Power potion.

Aiiieee!!' screamed the old man, and almost passed out. 'You scared me,' he said, and told Main about the monsters at the Gate of the Ancients.

The Shining Force form

After exploring more — and getting thrown out of the treasure room — Main looked for the King, Varios or Lowe. He found Varios talking to the King.

The King told Main about the Gate of the Ancients and the monsters lurking around it. Then came the question: 'Main, will you take the task?' 'Yes,' Main answered, and was told to gather troops and return when he was ready.

As he left for the town, he met Luke, Keu, Tao, Hans, Lowe and someone called Nova. These would be the first members of the Shining Force! Main returned to the castle.

The King gave Main his instructions and a hundred coins. Main bought ten medical herbs from the supply shop, which he shared with the others, then recorded [Saved] his story at the chapel.

Outside the town and on the way to the gate, Lowe noticed the goblins...

In battle

1. Attack one creature at a time (ie, call the party on one goblin).
2. If you kill the monster at the back (Boss Monster), all his weakling luck.

When they returned to battle, the goblins started to run back to the Dark dwarves but Hans the Archer had other ideas and attacked them. The Shining Force destroyed this bunch of monsters and returned home.

Their town had been almost wiped out. Main talked to everyone, then went to the wine bar and met Gort. They talked and Gort joined their force.

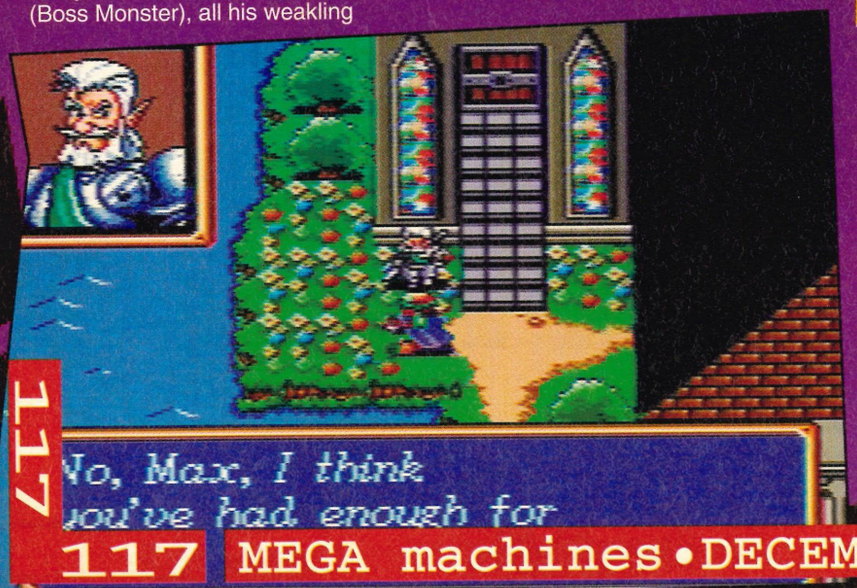
Bats first, ask questions later

Main went to the castle. The moment he entered, a man ran over and asked for help. When he reached the courtroom, Main witnessed the end of a fight between Kane and Varios. As Varios died, Mae rushed in and Kane left. The King told them about Anri and Mae, too, joined the team.

Main bought more supplies then went to the chapel to record [Save] his adventures. Before he left, he spoke to the old man in the top-right corner.

Their next journey was to Alterone in the north. Along the way they ran into giant bats, Dark dwarves and Rune Knights. As they fought, Main noticed the bats were putting people to sleep then killing them. Main promised himself that, from now on, he'd kill the bats first.

As they entered Alterone, Main



CHAPTER 2

After Main had explored Rindo and talked to everyone he met, he ran into Guntz, who was some form of guinea pig for Crock. Unknown to Main, he'd meet Guntz later.

After buying supplies and weapons, Main went and recorded his life with the friar, then left for Manarina, north-west of Rindo. It was on the way that they ran into trouble.

In battle

1. The most important person this time is Tao. Protect her and she'll wipe out all the zombies and Dark Mages.
2. ZOMBIES HATE FIRE!

As Main entered Manarina, he saw Princess Anri, but she didn't listen to him until Nova appeared. Full of sorrow, she ran off.

Nova told Main to go after her, which he did. Along the way, he talked to everyone and met someone called Arthur. On the way back, Main turned into a hen! While in this form, he got past a guard who'd forbidden his passage earlier.

He talked to Anri then went to see Otraut, who told him to enter a cave for the Orb of Light. He found it in a chest in the top-right corner. The monsters didn't give him much trouble, although the skeleton was troublesome near the end.

Returning to Otraut, he received and followed instructions on where to use the orb. Otraut told him where to go next but before he did he went to see Arthur, who joined Shining Force. Main went to see the friar again and 'Saved' his story.

Back in Rindo, the first thing Main did was see the Major. The Major's son was missing and, knowing the kid wanted to go to the circus, Main set off for the big top.

As he entered the tent, he stepped straight into a fight with the Witch from Alterone.

In battle

1. For this fight, 'stick' together in a single group.
2. Most of these creatures are magical and therefore deadly
3. If you don't attack the boss, she heals them.
4. The bats put you to sleep, mannequins poison you, evil puppets use Freeze and dire clowns have spells which wreck your hit points.
5. The marionette's EXTREMELY DANGEROUS. It has Freeze 3, which can kill five people at once. It also heals itself if you skip an attack.





After rescuing the nipper, Main returned to the Major, who gladly gave him his boat. Main bought more supplies but as he met Nova at the moorings, the Witch appeared and sunk the boat.

When he'd recovered, Main visited the Major's family, who told him to go to Shade Abbey. When he got there, he ran into Amom, who asked for help to save Balbaroy, in the chapel.

As the Shining Force arrived, a trap was sprung and another fight began.

In battle

Kill the zombies then attack the ghoul. Be careful — it hits hard and kills you if you're not careful. Surround it then kill it. Again, it heals itself if no one attacks.

After the fight, Balbaroy and Amon joined the Shining Force, but Main would find that the only good thing about them was their speed.



SHINING force

Playing Tips

poison





CHAPTER 3

Main wandered around Bushtoke and talked to everyone. He bought new weapons, more supplies and found out about the quarry and someone called Zylo. Diane joined the SF team.

After recording his adventure, Main went to the quarry. When he arrived, the army of Runefaust had found the Lazer Eye!

In battle

The beings you must kill are the Dark Priests, because they heal the others, who shouldn't give any hassle.

After the battle Main went to see the Alchemist, who gave him the Lunar Drew to cure a werewolf, Zylo. (Zylo can really kick butt once he's been promoted and gone up a few levels — use him straight away.)

After talking to everyone and buying more supplies, Main set off to destroy the Lazer Eye.

In battle

1. Don't worry about the other creatures, KILL THE LAZER EYE! It will kill anything in its line of sight.
2. Watch out for the Pegasus Knights from now on. They hit hard and evade your attacks unless you use magic.

CHAPTER 4



In Pao, Main talked to everyone then bought some more supplies and weapons, checking he had everything before saying 'yes' to Queen Korana. On his travels he ran into Earnest, who he'd meet later.

When the train left Pao, Main walked carefully around the field and found Vankar, who was recruited to the cause. They walked right… and into a fight with General Elliott.

In battle

1. The best way to fight this is as a group against one creature — it makes things easier in the long run.
2. From now on, swap one person for each battle; you'll soon get a strong team.
3. During the fight, you should find a heat axe. Equip Gort or Luke with it as soon as possible.
4. If you don't attack Elliott, he heals himself.



Returning to Pao, Main bought all the supplies he needed,



The Runefaust army is near Dragonia. But Bleu is all alone in the village.

CHAPTER 6

Main bought more supplies and weapons then walked around Kudo, talking to everyone he found. He ran into Lyle, who joined up.

The next mission was to rescue a dragon called Bleu. So being the hero type, Main set off.

In battle

1. This shouldn't give you too much trouble. However, beware of Durahan — they hit hard
2. When you get close to the town, six monsters appear. These, too, are very hard. You've been warned!

After the fight, Main found Bleu, who joined up. Kane reappeared and the rematch was on!



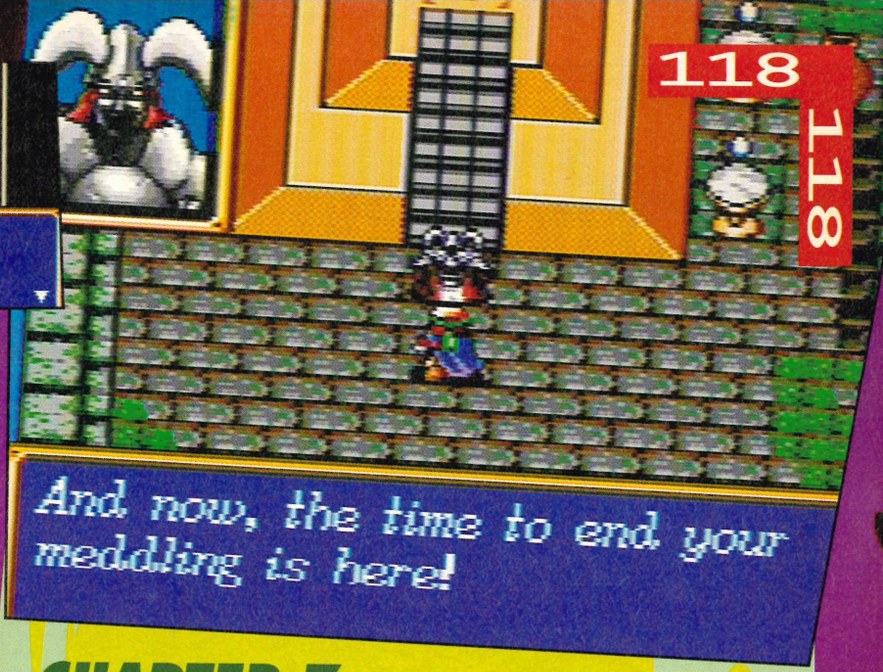
In battle

This is your hardest fight. Stick together, surround him with your strongest troops then kill him! Be extremely careful, Kane hits very, very hard.

After the battle, Main searched around town. All he found was a supply shop, so he went to the shrine. The door would only open for two heroes, but as he was about to leave Main spotted the good Kane. They went back to the door and it opened this time.

Darksol was downstairs. Kane pushed Main out, there was a loud bang and they were gone!

Main bought more supplies and left town for Rudo. After talking to the



CHAPTER 7

Main chose not to equip anyone with the cursed Dark and Black rings, instead selling them for around £20,000. He equipped himself with the White ring.

Main spoke to the King but was thrown in prison for his troubles! Bolen set him free after he'd searched the bars.

After talking with the King again, Main noticed a sign near a pond and two doors. It said someone had joined the Shining Force!

After seeing what was left of Kane, Main bought supplies and left for the Tower of the Ancients.

In battle

1. Torch Eye is a robot that hits you with a laser.
2. Minotaurs just hit hard; so do wyverns.
3. If you come cross a Doom Blade, sell it because it curses whoever's equipped with it. You should get £5400 for it.

When the last monster had died, Main returned to the chapel and recorded his story. He bought more supplies and left town for the tower.

In battle

1.Watch out for the ice worm, it has a Freeze spell for breath.
2. Steel Claw attacks with a laser and is very, very hard.
3. The Demon Master has Freeze
3. It takes 15–20 HP off a maximum of five people.

After watching Kane die, Main visited the King and found he had to create a sword known as the Chaos Breaker. So after buying yet more supplies, off he went.

Main walked right and saw Adam. He followed the instructions then followed him.

It was here that Screech showed up. The Shining Force were in yet another battle.

In battle

You've fought all of these before but this time they all go for Main more than usual. All of these creatures hit hard.

After defeating the latest round of foes, Main headed up to the altar. He searched for four stones then found and followed the instructions. He received the sword and went through the gates [don't forget to equip the Chaos Breaker].

Once he'd stored his adventure and bought more supplies, Main left and ran into the army of Runefaust.



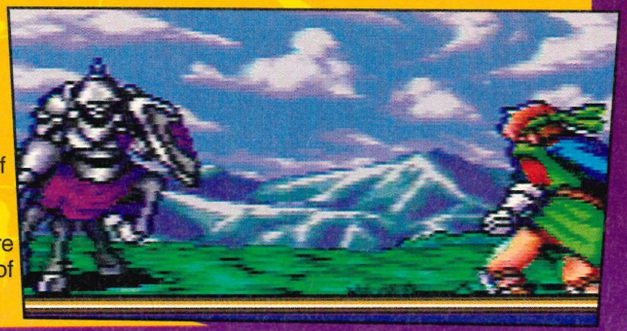
restocked on weapons and talked to everyone. Along the way, he got a message from Earnest and Guntz joined the team.

After Saving his story, Main left town and headed north to the castle.

In battle

There are two doors being defended —attack the top door last. Beware of the Hellhound!

After Main saw Earnest in the castle, he bought more supplies and entered the docks. Balbazak and his army were waiting for him…



In battle

You've fought all of these before, but watch out for the sea bats. These are stronger relations of giant bats.

CHAPTER 5



After the battle, the Shining Force boarded the boat and headed off to the sea. It wasn't long before the boat was attacked.

In battle

This battle's easy enough but beware of shellfish and conchs because they poison you.

Main explored and talked to the inhabitants of Waral. He got some decent treasure from the chests in the shop, bought more weapons and supplies, then took the boat to the friar, who recorded his adventure.

Aboard once more, Main went through the buoys. When he awoke he was in Ring Reef and found the missing friar.

Main explored the island. He stood on the blue shape in the middle of the island and vanished! When he appeared, he was face to face with a skeleton. Main followed the skeleton… into a trap.

In battle

You shouldn't have much hassle with these monsters — you've fought them all before. If you kill the Master Mage, all the others die.

After leaving Ring Reef, Main visited the King and bought more supplies. As Main and his crew left the islands of Waral, the boat was attacked again.

In battle

1. Don't get surrounded or you'll die.
2. **This is a longer battle than it looks: more monsters appear before long.**
3. **You've fought all of these before except the gargoyle, but he shouldn't be any hassle. The Muddle spell doesn't seem to do much.**



sisters, he went on to Prompt. Along the way, he ran into the Witch from Alterone.

In battle

1. Beware of the new creatures. Belial has the same skills as a gargoyle except with a Level 1 Bolt spell.
2. Bowriders are the same as Hains but more powerful. They can attack from three squares away.
3. Her headquarters are south of Rudo. When it's your turn, press [B]



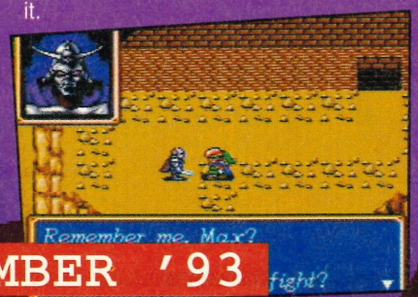
and move the white square down then right. The skull is your target.

4. By now you should've chosen 12 characters. I used all my knights, two mages and two healers. Just develop their skills from now on.

After the fight, Main entered the building and was briefed on the next battle, then used Egress. Main bought more supplies and returned to Prompt to get even with the Witch.

In battle

1. You've met all of the creatures before, but this time they're more likely to use their magic. Bowriders hit hard.
2. Belial has a Devil's Smile which takes your MP.
3. The Witch has an unknown amount of magic which she uses in the form of Bolt 2. It can attack up to 13 people! She heals herself if you don't attack her.
4. As you fight, open treasure chests for lots of decent stuff. The Sword of Light is in the top-right chest, next to the Witch. If you can, equip Main with it.



CHAPTER 8



In battle

From now on it gets very hard. You may have to repeat battles to raise your party's levels. Once the first battle's finished and the second one starts, retreat and buy more supplies and weapons. Save your game if necessary.

For the second battle, stick together and attack Ramradu together. If you kill him, all the robots die.

After returning to town, buying more supplies and recording his story, Main returned to get Darksol!



In battle

1. Go to the westernmost point and use the Chaos Breaker. Once the castle has arisen, return to the gate — it's now open.
2. Your next task is to kill Colossus. Each head has 65 HP and can use Blaze Level 3. When he has one head left, he uses Bolt 3, which inflicts around 25 HP of damage.
3. You've met the other monsters before. They're just as deadly, if not more so.
4. When the battle's finished, retreat, stock up on supplies and save your game.

The last battle

1. As before, stick together and attack in a group.
2. Darksol has an unknown amount of HP and MP. Be very careful.
3. The Dark Dragon has an unknown amount of energy and roughly 800 HP. Your party should be on or over Level 30.
4. It attacks with a Bolt 4 spell, which inflicts up to 30 points of damage on a maximum of 13 people at once. It also has Level 2 Desoul and Demon Breath, which takes up to 60 HP.
5. Next to Dark Dragon are two grey squares. Every now and again an armed skeleton appears on them.
6. DON'T RETREAT OR YOU'LL HAVE TO FACE DARKSOL AGAIN.



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

The Mega Drive version of TSR's grisly roleplaying adventure causes headaches and upset stomachs for many gamers. Luckily, Susan White from Fife has a soothing tonic.

Your first objective is to build up hit points and gather gold to buy weapons. Explore the castle and you find armour, weapons and some scrolls in the towers.

When you leave the castle, head north then veer right and go under the waterfall. In the cave there you meet some snake-like creatures. Hide behind the wall and shoot at them when they show themselves.

When you've killed them, leave and re-enter the cave. More creatures lie in wait, so repeat the process until your hit points are up to about 20. This is the quickest and safest way to gain strength.

When your points are built up, explore the rest of the cave. At the far end a door leads to a hill but there's nothing to be gained.

Leave the cave, walk left to a camp-fire and kill the beastmen. Pick up their weapons and gold.

Off the map

Go to the bridge left of the castle then head north to the caves at the corner. The top-centre cave is the one you need but explore others first to gain strength.

Before you can go any further, you have to go back to the castle to visit Marmillian, who gives you a withering vine so you may pass through certain vines.

If hit points are sufficient, first walk south around the wall, where there's a hidden cave. You won't get far here without a withering vine but you'll find lots of items. Back at the castle, buy armour then get a caravan back to caves.

In the top-centre cave, the first creature carries poison, so when you pass through the vine, stop and it comes to you. Use a Magic Missile spell and slingshots, bows and arrows to kill it quickly.

Head north-east as far as possible then a little west and look for a door to the north. Memorise the map before entering as it's erased when you leave.

At the swamp, revive any dead party members in the pond then kill the beastmen. Look in their huts for artifacts then leave.

Rings of fire

Go back through the cave and, before going to the castle, visit the cave in the rocks to find gold, which hound dogs are guarding. Take your findings to Marmillian.

Next stop is the Azcan cave, to the right of the beastman caves, across the bridge in the northern wall. Kill the giant and walk through the wall. Explore and memorise every part of this maze.

You should find a door which leads to the jungle, where dead can be revived in a pool far left, just past a river. If you have no dead, head north to the Azcan temple, where you find the fire rings. Leave the way you entered.

If you go back to the castle, don't visit the throne or you're escorted out, so visit armoury, weapons or magic shops then leave.

Now you have the fire rings, go into the flames and the cave at the top. Make sure you aren't carrying much and find the woman at the end, who hands you a necklace. Visit Marmillian, who gives you a scroll and directions to the last cave.

In the elves' caves (there are three to conquer), find the burrower and you've completed the game!

Hints

Avoid wraiths and vampires as these lower your hit points. If encountered, use the Turn Undead spell before you kill them.

Rest frequently; you can do so underground.

Bows and slingshots are best in caves. Lightning and thunder should only be used in wilderness combat.

Jonathan Kerr from Glasgow has tips for the Valley section of this massive game.

1. Look in guard towers
2. Talk to all villagers
3. Buy armour and weapons
4. Look behind the church for a secret passage
5. Look in the magic shop for a secret room
6. Save the game frequently
7. Enter fights to gain next level points
8. To ensure victory in battles, hide behind a big bush and choose a sling or bow and keep pressing [A] or [B]



BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS

Action Replay

It's surprising Bart doesn't wear a neck brace, considering how often Homer grabs him by the throat. To make the transformation from brat to hero, try these AR codes.

FF01B70002	Infinite energy
FF01B50002	Use with above
FF01B40004	Infinite lives
FF01450010	Infinite money
FF01A40001	Infinite spray cans
FF022D0001	Use with above

Oh No! It's more...

Shining Force

ACTION REPLAY CODES BLEU

FFA0630064	Every hit raises Bleu a level
FFAO650063	99 HP
FFA0670063	Infinite HP

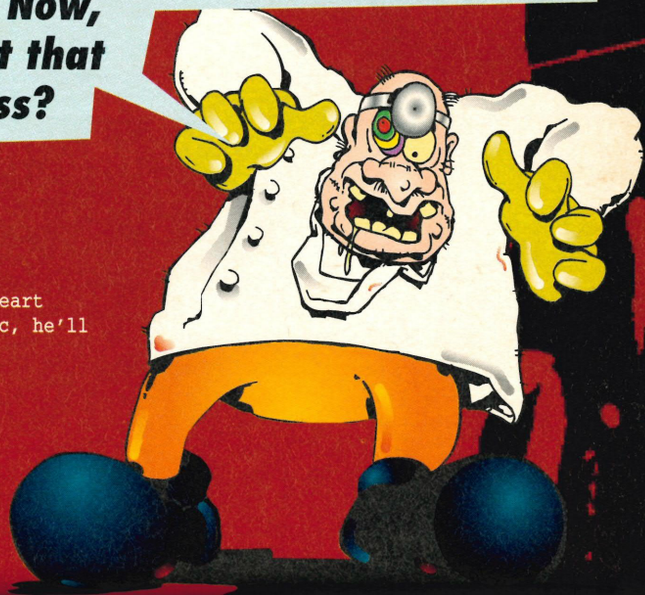
ACTION REPLAY CODES LYLE

FF9FC5006	99HP
FF9FC30064	Use with below
FF9FC30064	Every hit raises Lyle a level
FF9FC70063	Infinite HP

I'm Mickey Mouse, I swear!



That's all from my Tips Clinic this month. Be sure to make your next appointment for next issue's opening hours. See ya then... Now, where did I put that surgical truss?



FANTASIA

Action Replay

Mickey's well into his 50s now and liable to heart problems. But with a little Action Replay magic, he'll be a hero for many years to come.

005D54103C	Gives energy when colliding with enemy (use with code below)
005D584E71	Use with above code
0062284E71	Infinite large magic
0062504E71	Infinite little magic
FF07D90004	Infinite strength
FF07DB0003	Infinite dreams (lives)
FF08370003	Infinite magic points

few laughs but the gameplay's basic.

JOE MONTANA II
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 76% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222
Joe is John's rival to the American Football crown The controls aren't as good as *Madden*'s, the zoom function's confusing and there's no play-offs. On the positive, graphics and sound are good, gameplay's suitably hectic.

JOE MONTANA 3
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 071 371 3000
Poor old Joe! This game doesn't put a foot wrong — plenty of options, several viewpoints, great graphics and heaps of quality speech — but still plays second fiddle to *John Madden '93*. Aaaahh!

JOHN MADDEN '93
EASN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 87% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
When EA beefed up *'92*'s graphics, added more speech, stats, battery backup system and classic teams, they created one of the best sports sims ever. If you're even mildly interested in American Football, purchase this forthwith!

JOHN MADDEN'S FOOTBALL '92
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.95 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
The original *Madden* was great, this is better. Improvements are mainly cosmetic but the new plays, Run & Shoot formation and instant replay function make it more professional. The ultimate American Football game.

JORDAN VS BIRD SUPER ONE-ON-ONE
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 55% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
The biggest names in basketball go head-to-head. Presentation's high but the sprites are sometimes blocky and gameplay's simply boring. One-on-one is the basis of a sub-game, *not* an entire cart.

MARIO LEMIEUX HOCKEY
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 49% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
A Mario game on Sega! But this namesake is no gaming star: players are sluggish, the control system's tricky and you spend half the time trying to find out who you are. Nice to look at, bad to listen to.

MUHAMMAD ALI HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 87% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
The greatest heavyweight boxer lends his name to the greatest boxing game! Naturally, the aim is to become champ, although exhibition bouts can be organised. Presentation, graphics, sound and gameplay are of the highest calibre.

MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Funny aliens and crafty demons add variety and humour to this vertically-scrolling American Football spoof. Pitches are dull but big sprites portray inevitable, enjoyable violence.

NBA ALL-STAR CHALLANGE
FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
The basic concept's a loser: it's one-on-one. Worse, some of the sub-games (as in 'way below par') are simpl.y shooting practice. There are clear digitised portraits and realistic animation but lastability's low.

NHLPA HOCKEY '93
EASN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Fights and the Sin Bin join team and player stats; the top 50 slappers have special moves! Professional presentation, EA's usual wide array of sport options and realistic graphics and sound; a top-notch sim.

OLYMPIC GOLD
US GOLD ◆ £39.99 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 021 625 3366
Hurdles, the 100 metres, pole vault, diving, swimming, archery and hammer throwing — not quite the full Olympics but their controls are easily mastered. Superb with the full complement of four players.

PGA TOUR GOLF II
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 73% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Restrained visuals and an upmarket approach mix well with comprehensive options and clever features. A 'skins' game and 'draw and fade' facility help bump this onto the 18th green.

POWERBALL
NAMCO ◆ £39.99 ◆ 30% ◆ Tel 0101 408 496 6371
A future version of football, blandly-drawn teams from around the globe compete on a dull pitch. It's difficult to see who's got the ball but you're unlikely to have it long, anyway. Still, the presentation's good.

PRO QUARTERBACK
TRADE WEST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 52% ◆ Tel 0101 903 874 2683
This attempts to steal Madden and Montana's thunder with fancy 3D perspective — which doesn't work! The number of plays is limited and their selection is confusing. It's fast, fun to watch and the music's funky.

RBI BASEBALL 4
TENGEN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 89% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Large sprites, smooth movement and quality sound make this a treat. A spread of options, numerous teams to choose, piles of stats and easy to learn controls complete the happy picture. Fourth time lucky!

SIDE POCKET
DATA EAST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 73% ◆ Tel 010 408 286 7080
The game's pool, Nine Ball and Pocket against another human, Trick Shot Challenge and a States-skipping solo Pocket game. The latter soon sets horribly high target scores but the two-player option's always fun.

SPEEDBALL 2
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
In a smooth-scrolling metallic arena, teams battle it out for possession of a metal ball. Collect coins to improve the team. Manic gameplay and great presentation. One of the best two-player sports games.

SUPER HIGH IMPACT
ARENA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Smart speech and pulse-pounding effects increase atmosphere in this crunching American Football game. It's aimed at newcomers to the sport and adds aggression with its Hit-O-Meter. Worthy of attention.

WINTER CHALLENGE
ACCOLADE ◆ £34.99 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880
Gather up to nine friends, choose nationalities and enter luge, downhill and cross-country skiing, bobsled, speed skating, slalom, biathon and ski jumping. The events vary in quality but feature realistic animation and 3D scenery.

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD
US GOLD ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 021 625 3366
US Gold gave up their snap-hook graph in favour of a fancy circular one for MD *Leaderboard*. Control is a hit-and-miss affair with the new device. Blocky graphics and weak sounds but there are plenty of courses and game types.

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ SF8 ◆ 59%
Get England into the final! Viewed from above, about a tenth of the pitch is shown at any one time. The graphics are colourful and movment's speedy, but with only three kicks to master, it won't keep you playing for long.

STRATEGY

Organise your troops, plan your moves, distribute resources... If your the type who thinks before they act, the following games should be right up your street.

KING SALMON
TOKAI ◆ £39.99 ◆ 57% ◆ Tel N/A
There's nothing fishy about this being in the strategy section. Bait type, line length and depth, where to fish... even the arcade sections require thought. Remarkably enjoyable but not for long.

MEGA-LO-MANIA
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
Somewhere in space, flamboyant gods struggle for control over epochs. Devote manpower to mining, invention, defence and combat. The icons are a touch confusing but speech is excellent and gameplay unsurpassed.

MONOPOLY
SCULPTURED S/WARE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 51% ◆ Tel N/A
As in the board game, go round and round the board, deciding which property to buy and where to put houses. It's well presented and easily played but nowhere near as satisfying as the real thing.

POWERMONGER
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 70% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
An in-depth version of *Populous*, men are recruited, land is farmed and power struggles develop in a war against computer commanders. Massive depth but the control system cripples the gameplay.

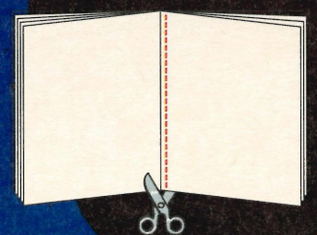
WARRIOR OF ROME II
MICRONET ◆ £39.99 ◆ 56% ◆ Tel N/A
Walk in Caesar's sandles and prevent the rebellion which killed him. Train men, organise troops, build colosseums and fortresses before going into combat. It takes a lot of time and patience.

The Big GAMES List Thing

When we were deciding what to put into into MEGA MACHINES (and what to leave out), the big bosses in the East Wing were adamant we include one of those 'buyers' guide' things. 'But that's boring,' we moaned, 'everyone does that.'

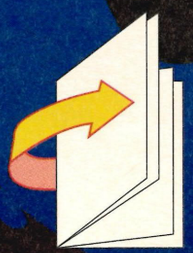
'That's as maybe,' came the reply, which is a pretty stupid thing to say. What the hell's it supposed to mean, anyway? 'We want an eight-page buyers' guide, and that's final!' came the demand, and who are we to argue? They do pay the wages, after all...

So, after giving it some thought, we ram-raided the Sega Force Mega offices and nicked theirs. It's got all the releases in, plus details on each game and how much – but we dumped their ratings and added our own (75% for G-LOC? Aw, c'mon!). AND we managed to fit itonto eight pages!



1 Take a sharp pair of scissors and cut along the dotted lines as shown...

2 Fold the pages in half and arrange in correct order. Slap in a couple of staples to hold it in place.



ARCADE GAMES

Coin-op conversions and mixed-genre games make these games the most action-packed around. Dragon's Fury leads the pack with 92% — what could be more arcade-like than pinball?

ALISIA DRAGOON
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
A magical wench, unleashing thunderbolts and teaming up with little dragons to save a fantasy world. Plenty of good ideas and not enough enemies, but a bargain at this price.

AMERICAN GLADIATORS
GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 45% ◆ Tel 0101 305 935 3995
Compete against the Glads or some friends in six events, including The Assault, Atlasphere and Joust. Graphics, sound and events are uniformly mediocre and the package soon bores. For die-hard fans of the series.

BATMAN
SUNSOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77% ◆ Tel 010 1714 8914500
Based on the Tim Burton movie, graphics are as dark and grim as the real thing. Platform, beat-'em-up and racing elements keep you busy but it's a bit easy.

BATMAN RETURNS
SEGA ◆ £49.99 ◆ 65% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
The Bat's back — as are the murky visuals. The Caped Crusader is slow and a devil to control, gameplay's repetitive but there's a challenge this time.

BATMAN: REVENGE OF THE JOKER
SUNSOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 59% ◆ Tel 0101 714 891 4500
The laughing one has henchsprites everywhere but the comic version Batman has a multi-purpose Batarang. It's monotonous and *tough*. Some good graphics, though.

BATTLETOADS
TRADEWEST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 58% ◆ Tel 0101 903 874 2683
Pimple the Battletoad has been captured and one or two toad colleagues launch a rescue. Various types of level and colourful graphics are commendable but it starts very difficult and gets easier!

CLASSIC ARCADE COLLECTION (CD)
SEGA ◆ £42.99 ◆ 66% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
One winner — the original *Streets Of Rage* — but *Columns* has had its day, *Revenge Of Shinobi* is middle-of-the-road and they've taken the two-player option from *Golden Axe*.

CRÜEBALL
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 60% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Motley Crüe music and aggressive metallic graphics but (or should that be 'so'?) this is a dull pinball table. Few bumpers and ramps, progress is slow. Buy the next game…

DRAGON'S FURY
TENGEN/DOMARK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Three smooth-scrolling screens of mystical pinball 'table'. Thumping good sounds and fast, realistic ball movement bring it to life, and with a host of bonus rooms, you'll flip over the lastability! Who would have thought console pinball could be so much fun?

DJ BOY
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 32% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
As the Boy, skate and bash through levels. Graphics are drab, effects similarly basic and controls are unresponsive. Available for years on import, it's terribly old fashioned and deathly dull.

GADGET TWINS
IMAGITEC/GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 0101 305 935 3995
Bop and Bump take to the skies to find their king's gem, collecting coins in order to buy better baddie-bashing gadgets. Bright, cartoony graphics, a big challenge and superb two-player option.

GREENDOG
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 69% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Greendog dodges animals or stuns them with a frisbee as he searches for the Lost Surfboard of the Ancients. He travels on skates or skateboard on alternate levels, adding flavour to a so-so cart.

MAKE MY VIDEO: KRIS KROSS
SONY IMAGESOFT ◆ £44.99 ◆ 70% ◆ TEL 0101 310 858 3777
Not exactly arcade, but it doesn't fit *any* category. Use three video screens and several effects to recreate videos request by 'listeners'. If you like the band, you'll love it, otherwise interest soon palls.

MARBLE MADNESS
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £34.99 ◆ 75% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Weird geometric landscapes are the home of weirder creatures, all out to stop the marble. Graphics are unusual but effective, controls and gameplay are unique. If only there were more levels…

OUTLANDER
MINDSCAPE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 0444 246333
In a post-nuclear world, hit the road… slowly, and nudge and shoot bikers. The action switches to scrolling beat-'em-up when you enter a village. An average *Mad Max* crash 'n' bash.

PAC-MANIA
DOMARK ◆ £29.99 ◆ 71% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Pac-man gets an update, receiving three-dimensional mazes and a jumping ability. Gameplay's simplistic but highly playable, helped by a nicely-shaded Pac sphere and toe-tapping music. Wonderful semi-nostalgia.

PAPERBOY
DOMARK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 49% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Trundle along diagonally-scrolling streets, throwing papers into mail boxes and avoiding odd people. Graphics and sound are quite close to the coin-op but the gameplay's novelty soon wanes.

PAPERBOY II
DOMARK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 55% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
More of the same, but you can choose your sex and launch papers both left and right — though this is unneccesary on individual sections. Lots of great speech but gameplay's strictly limited.

ROLLING THUNDER 2
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Become Secret Agent Leila or Albatross (or both) and infiltrate enemy bases, pumping adversaries full of lead and ducking into doorways. Large, realistically-animated sprites, tough but playable.

SAINT SWORD
TAITO ◆ £39.99 ◆ 65% ◆ Tel 0101 708 520 9280
Hack your way along levels and transform into a centaur, birdman or fishman! Collision detection's cruel but short, dull levels mean you won't care. Reasonable graphics, few effects.

TOXIC CRUSADERS
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 60% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Become a Crusader (or two) and skate along six levels, bashing baddies and collecting power-ups. Repetitive gameplay, iffy collision detection and bad control response send this to an early grave.

ARCADE ADVENTURE

Perfect for those who want to use equal parts of brain and digital dexterity. Two of the winners, *Prince Of Persia* and *Flashback*, sport the best MD animation ever.

ALEX KIDD IN THE ENCHANTED CASTLE
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 37% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Explore Paperock Planet, battling and chatting to various characters. Games of Paper, Scissors, Stone earns items to help you. Bland MS-like graphics, naff scrolling, forgettable effects, poor controls and insipid gameplay.

ANOTHER WORLD
VIRGIN/DELPHINE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
An experiment gone wrong sends Lester to another world. Armed with his wits, a gun and stunning polygon animation, he tackles its dangers. Sharp reflexes and a sharp mind are required to conquer this atmospheric epic.

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS
FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Eek! The Space Mutes are plotting to take over the Earth! Bart uses a spray can and ingenuity to spoil the items they need. Neat sprites, bubbly muzak and Bart samples polish up this engaging cartoon-like adventure.

ECCO: THE DOLPHIN
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
The dolphin's chums have been 'napped. Ecco explores, consults glyphs and uses sonar to stun opponents. Superb graphics, evocative sounds and a strangely soothing challenge.

FLASHBACK
US GOLD/DELPHINE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 93% ◆ Tel 021 625 3366
Conrad's travelled to an alien planet to thwart their Earth-conquering plan. Many objects are collected and places visited, all richly coloured. Animation and attention to detail are unbelievable. The best of its kind.

NIGHT TRAP (CD)
SONY IMAGESOFT ◆ £54.99 ◆ 67% ◆ Tel 0101 310 858 3777
Controversy time! Scan different sections of a house and trigger traps to defend young women. It's a repetitive matter of finding enemy after enemy, but the sound's great and digitised video pleasing.

PRINCE OF PERSIA (CD)
BRODERBOUND ◆ £44.99 ◆ 69% ◆ Tel N/A
What else but save the princess? There's a good intro and a great set of eastern tunes but the graphics are mediocre for CD game and it doesn't play as well as the Master System version. Let the damsel croak.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST
SEGA/TECMAGIK ◆ £19.99 ◆ 51% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Traverse scrolling plains and vast caverns to find your loathed master. Keys, potions and weapons are collected, although fists are often used. Parallax scrolling and detailed sprites don't increase lastability.

SMASH TV
ACCLAIM ◆ £34.99 ◆ 72% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
One or two players explore the single screen rooms of a futuristic gameshow. One of the novelties is the ability to fire in one direction while running in another, vital for survival in this hectic blaster. A flawed conversion.

SPACE HARRIER II
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 55% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
The original began the trend for hydraulic chairs and cabinets in the arcades. Blastin' nasties and dodging obstacles has limited appeal as their patterns are soon learnt, but at this price it's okay as a piece of nostalgia.

SUNSET RIDERS
KONAMI ◆ £39.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 081 429 2446
Back in the Wild West, one or two bounty hunters pump mean cowboys and meaner bosses full of lead, collecting ammo and cash along the way. Its lighthearted graphics and gameplay are appealing.

SUPER FANTASY ZONE
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Cute, bold and *very* colourful graphics hit you between the eyes! Spare parts and weapons shops are very necessary to survive this fast, tough shoot-'em-up. Addictive, take-no-prisoners blasting at its best.

SUPER THUNDER BLADE
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 36% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
In its day, the coin-op's graphics wowed gamers, but the same was never true of the MD's. Slow, jerky movement detracts rather than adds to the weak gameplay the coin-op's 3D graphics disguised.

THE TERMINATOR
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
First in 2029 then back in 1984, Kyle Reese defends Sarah Connor from a Terminator. There are plenty of ladders and stairs to negotiate and even more foes to blast. *Terminator* fans will love it, others should try it first.

TERMINATOR 2
ACCLAIM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Direct gunsights and blow Terminators to scrap metal, but remember to collect ammo and gun coolant. This *Op Wolf* update is the best of its kind. Superb graphics, raucous sound and non-stop action. Even better with the Menacer.

THUNDER FORCE IV
TECNO SOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 88% ◆ Tel N/A
Following three respectable shoot-'em-ups, it's no surprise this is one of the best blasters around. Other than some slowdown, there's nothing to fault but plenty to enjoy. Stunning graphics, high quality sounds and addictive gameplay.

THUNDERSTORM FX (CD)
WOLFTEAM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel N/A
A cartoon view from an attack chopper is overlayed with a gunsight, used to blast terrorists. *Thunderstorm FX*/*Cobra Command* is already looking crude compared to new releases but offers a hew hours' amusement.

TWIN COBRA
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 52% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
It uses the changing icon method of power-ups — the weapon you get depends upon its colour when collected. Average graphics and sound but plenty of levels to keep you busy, if you can stay interested.

TWINKLE TALE
WAS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel N/A
Viewed from above and just behind the hero, there's an arcade adventure feel to the varied level designs and a numb feeling in your fingers after you tackle end-level guardians! For both beginners and experienced gamers.

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER
ACCOLADE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880
Armed with an automatic gun, laser whip, power lines and gyroscope mode, find yet more weapons as you destroy waves of dull mechanical opponents. An above-average platform blaster but disappointing licence.

ZERO WING
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 74% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Up against Cat's forces (no, not from *Red Dwarf*), you can use a tractor beam to grab enemies and launch them at others! Good use of colour, cool explosions and weapon effects, but gameplay's run-of-the-mill.

SPORTS

Balls of all sizes, shapes and textures feature in these games, the odd hockey, boxing and multi-event cart breaking the pattern.

THE AQUATIC GAMES
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
James Pond and his 'Aquabat' chums compete in running, jumping, seal-minding, shell-flipping and kipper-feeding events. Graphics are gorgeous, sounds are superb, but there's limited enjoyment, even with a few players.

ARCH RIVALS
FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 71% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
A conversion of a two-on-two coin-op (the second basketballer controlled by the computer), it features superb cartoon intermissions but gameplay foibles. Limited gameplay against the computer, fun with a friend.

BULLS VS LAKERS AND THE NBA PLAYOFFS
EASN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Options up to yer eyeballs and a versatile control system ain't enough. It's a struggle to get into then is too samey to keep you interested. Some good animation and FX but odd music.

CALIFORNIA GAMES
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 74% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222
Up to nine players compete or practice half-pipe skateboarding, footbag, surfing, rollerskating and BMX racing. The different control methods are soon mastered but this mixed bag of events soon loses appeal.

CAL RIPKIN JR BASEBALL
MINDSCAPE ◆ £34.99 ◆ 66% ◆ Tel 0444 246333
Although there's not much of it, the crystal-clear speech is the only thing to differentiate this from the crowd: Exhibition, League and Home Run games, 18 teams, pitching variables, stick man fielders…

DAVID ROBINSON'S SUPREME COURT
ACCLAIM ◆ £34.99 ◆ 57% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Manual player selection and difficult stealing make defence a pain but beating the computer's easy. The court flips 45° at the halfway line, confusing all games. Aesthetically pleasing but the gameplay's lacking.

EURO CLUB SOCCER
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
Control any of 170 teams, enter the five-round European Cup then aim for the ultimate: the Super Cup. The action's viewed from the stands and all three buttons are used. Once you've got the hang of it, it's playable.

EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S 'REAL DEAL' BOXING
SEGA ◆ £49.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Customise your boxer, train him then hop in the ring and bash his opponent! Versatile yet easy-to-use controls, large boxers and realistic controls. Expensive and superceded by *Muhammad Ali* but give it a go.

FLAMING DODGEBALL KID
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 76% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Similar to volleyball, the basic idea's to hit members of the second team with the ball. A worthwhile alternative sport and well represented by sizeable Japanese cartoon graphics. Give it a play.

GRANDSLAM TENNIS
TELENET ◆ £34.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel N/A
Plenty of options: design a character, practice shots, compete in exhibitions, play doubles… All buttons are used but text book plays and tactics don't work. B1land graphics are the plain vanilla icing on the stodgy cake.

HARDBALL III
ACCOLADE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880
Although the rhythm's often mechanical, the running commentary adds life to this baseball sim. Piles of options but menus are used in gameplay, too. Expect more strategic elements than fast-paced sport.

JENNIFER CAPRIATI TENNIS
RENOVATION ◆ £39.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 0101 408 982 2700
Oodles of options, nifty FX and smooth character and ball movement get Jenny's game off to a great start. The variety of shots, tournaments and two-player option make it the best MD tennis game.

JERRY GLANVILLE'S PIGSKIN FOOTBRAWL
RAZORSOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 59% ◆ Tel 0101 405 843 3505
American Football with a barbarian slant. The pitch is littered with tree stumps and rocks, the indoor arena has trap doors and *more* rocks. The cartoon violence gives a

and shoot or stun g uards. This wacky coin-op conversion features unusual Lego graphics and neat cooperative gameplay. Original, fast-paced fun.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

DATA EAST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 0101 408 286 7080

Choose from four Avengers then use fists and weapons to tackle the Red Skull's thugs and super-accomplices. A suitably bright, cartoon-like, energetic game, it has loads of wacky speech.

CHAKAN

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 62% ◆ TEL 071 371 3000

Doomed to eternal life until he rids Earth of supernatural evil, use Chakan's twin swords to do just that. Controls are awkward, levels play and feel the same. Moody graphics, lukewarm gameplay.

CHIKI CHIKI BOYS

CAPCOM ◆ £49.99 ◆ 81% ◆ TEL 0101 4087 270 4000

Sword-swiping Chiki Boy becomes Flying and Sea Chiki in certain sections of this typically Japanese, cute and colourful romp. Varied graphics, plenty of hidden extras and tough levels.

CHUCK ROCK

VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255

Chuck's main weapon against five levels of dinosaurs is his belly-butt. He uses rocks as stepping stones and to kill baddies. Cheerful graphics, vertical and leftward sections and puzzle elements make this highly playable.

COOL SPOT

VIRGIN GAMES ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255

The red dot from 7-Up cans has to rescue spotty chums. Fizz-blasts dispatch crabs, mice, frogs and birds, small spots give essential coolness. Very slick but too similar to the superior *Global Gladiators*.

DECAPATTACK

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

Become a Mummy and use its heads to free an island! One head extends from the stomach, the other's thrown. Power-ups aid the quest against equally strange adversaries. The idea and graphics are great but it's too easy.

EX-MUTANTS

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 85% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

As Ex-Mutant Ackroyd or Shannon, hack into mutants and rescue your mates. Comic-book graphics and cool sampled sounds complement easy-to-get-into, hard-to-master gameplay.

THE FLINTSTONES

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 87% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

Fred's family and friends have lost various items and it's down to him to recover them. He clubs dinosaurs and clings to ledges, later travelling by car and train. Great cartoon graphics and engaging action.

GALAHAD

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77% ◆ Tel 0753 549442

Galahad's a vulnerable chap — *anyone* would be, set against these tough monsters. There's a neat selection of swords and armour but not enough continues. Gameplay grows on you, perhaps not quick enough.

GLOBAL GLADIATORS

VIRGIN ◆ £39.99◆ 94% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255

Detailed foregrounds, neat graphical effects, slick presentation, wacky sprites and sounds. The eco-friendly gameplay's just as good. One of the most addictive platformers there is.

HOME ALONE

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 62% ◆ Tel 071 371 3000

As loveable Kevin (ha!), sledge around outdoors, invent weapons from household objects and set burglar traps. Good options and sound but gameplay's very repetitive. Original but flawed.

HUMANS

IMAGITEC/GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆83% ◆ Tel 010 305 935 3995

Using different implements and types of caveman, traverse from platform to platform till the end of the level where a new invention awaits. Sounds simple but *Humans* is a unique brain-bending platform game.

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

US GOLD ◆ £39.99 ◆ 83% ◆ Tel 021 625 3366

As punching, whipping, leaping Indy, work your way through five levels to retrieve the Holy Grail. Platform puzzles, blandly-coloured but well defined sprites, crisp FX and a sizeable challenge.

JAMES BOND: THE DUEL

DOMARK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222

One of 007's worst enemies has kidnapped Prof Jones. First on a tanker, Bond finds hostages and bomb parts then tackles Jaws. Crisp graphics, nice sounds, realistic animation and four tough levels make Bond's mission a success.

JAMES POND II

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 86% ◆ Tel 0753 549442

As the cyborg Pond, negotiate countless screens in a bid to save Christmas. Pond squashes himself into a ball to kill enemies and stretches his mid-section to reach high platforms. Superlative graphics, sound and gameplay.

JEWEL MASTER

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 74% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222

To free Mythgard from Jardine the Mad, use magic rings separately or combined for offence and defence. Backgrounds, sprites and sounds are all dull. Dumb assailants and samey gameplay. A wasted concept.

KID CHAMELEON

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 82% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222

Sucked into a video game, Kid headbutts blocks and jumps on monsters. A variety of masks give different identities and extra powers. Kid's sprites give flavour till gameplay builds up and takes the lead. Enough to keep you busy.

LITTLE MERMAID

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

Play music to scare away sea creatures as you search for merpeople. When things get tough, call a fishy friend for help! Great graphics and soothing music set the Disney atmosphere. Best for younger players.

QUACKSHOT

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

Donald's on a globe-trotting treasure hunt and hops along platforms, 'plungering' enemies before plundering the goodies. Superb sprites and animation; this near-classic has enough depth for all the family.

RISKY WOODS

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 74% ◆ Tel 0753 549442

As robed Rohan, rescue monks, negotiate platforms and gather weapons. Terrific graphics but temperamental controls and a tiring onslaught of enemies is irritating. 'Kill or cure' pick-ups don't help.

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 93% ◆ Tel 0753 549 442

The elephant jumps on enemies and collects keys to free animals, which follow Rolo then use their distinctive talents individually. Cute, colourful graphics and deep, addictive platform action. A legend in its own buntime.

SONIC 2

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 95% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

A two-tailed fox helps Sonic speed around levels, collect rings and stop Robotnik. Play as Tails or in a two-player split-screen race. Backgrounds are bright and smooth-scrolling, sprites are full of character. Very impressive.

STRIDER II

US GOLD ◆ £39.99 ◆83% ◆ TEL 021 625 3366

With a laser sword and spider-like abilities, acrobatic Strider takes on impressive robotic adversaries on the way to the evil Master's lair. Great speech, tough levels but versatile controls.

TALESPIN

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 68% ◆ Tel 071 371 3000

Baloo and little bear pal Kit are really crate! They've gotta find ten on each level and fire balls at baddies. An air battle breaks up simplistic yet frustratingly difficult gameplay. Pleasant graphics don't save it.

TAZ-MANIA

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 89% ◆ Tel 071 371 3000

Taz searches for legendary birds and their yummy eggs. Authentic Warner Bros cartoon graphics with sounds to match really make this game. Although it's a touch easy, its originality and character make it a classic.

TINY TOON ADVENTURES

KONAMI ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 081 429 2446

Buster Bunny and his wacky companions star in an ultra-slick mixture of *Sonic* and *Super Mario World*. It's as fast as it is addictive; you're hooked as soon as you start. One of the best.

TOKI

SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 73% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222

Toki the Ape spits fireballs at enemies as he searches for his girl and a spell to restore his humanity. Happy music and good sprites spur things along, but although it's easy to get into, it gets repetitive.

WONDERDOG (CD)

CORE DESIGN ◆ £44.99 ◆ 89% ◆ Tel 0332 297797

WonderDog races through seven levels, throwing stars at odd animals. Wings, happy pills and bones are collected and secret levels found. Superb sprites and animation, smooth eight-way scrolling and hum-along CD sounds.

WORLD OF ILLUSION

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 071 371 3000

Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck use magic sheets to blow away assailants. Teamwork and special features help them. Superb sprites and animation, loads of tunes and addictive play are only tainted by relatively low lastability.

PUZZLE GAMES

Pure thought and deductive reasoning (almost) replace fancy graphics — with the exception of Sherlock's digitised video and Krusty's winning cartoon sprites at 93%!

CLUE

SCULPTURED S/WARE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 54% ◆ Tel N/A

'It was Professor Plum, with the candlestick, in the study,' and similar accusations. Amusing graphic interludes and a variety of remarkably fitting tunes but you can't beat the real board game.

GREAT WALDO SEARCH

THQ SOFTWARE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 25% ◆ Tel 0101 818 591 1615

Magnifying glass icon at the ready, search for scrolls and bonuses then the bespectacled drip in the red and white scarf — Waldo. Even bearing in mind its for children, *Waldo*'s horribly simple.

JEOPARDY

GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 40% ◆ Tel 0101 305 935 3995

Well presented but questions soon repeat and have an American bias. Answers have to be entered letter by letter and spelling errors aren't excused; computer players aren't afflicted. Jolly music, though.

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE

FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 93% ◆ Tel 0962 877788

Position blocks, tube sections, fans and springs to direct dumb rats, while using custard pies to kill patrolling enemies. Mind-scrambling puzzles, madcap platform action and hidden rooms to find.

LEMMINGS

SEGA/SUNSOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

Use limited numbers of digging, tunneling, bridge-building, climbing and floating lemmings to overcome obstacles. Loads of levels and tough yet incredibly addictive gameplay make *Lemmings* unmissable.

SHERLOCK HOLMES, CONSULTING DETECTIVE (CD)

ICOM/SLEUTH ◆ £44.99 ◆ 86% ◆ Tel N/A

Consult suspects and colleagues, travelling around Olde London as you do so, and reconstruct one of three crimes from the facts you glean. FMV and CD sound lend credibility and humour.

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 62% ◆ Tel 0101 305 935 3995

A tiled wall hides a (supposedly) familiar phrase. Spin the wheel to set a cash value and pick a letter. If it's in the phrase, the letter's revealed. Guess till your wrong or solve the puzzle. Dull sound, dull graphics, dull gameplay…

RACERS

Hands on the steering, pedal to the metal. Jostle for position and lean into those corners. Swear when computer cars cut you up and steal the lead…

AYRTON SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX 2

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 88% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

The original was great, this is better. In addition to 16 'real' tracks, Senna designed two special tracks and had snippets of his speech digitised. Speed and scrolling are top notch and the car handles well.

CHAMPIONSHIP PRO-AM

TRADEWEST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 70% ◆ Tel 0101 903 874 2683

An angled aerial view scrolls to track remote control-style trucks. Steering's relative to the car so controls are confusing. Fun when mastered but tracks are samey. There's no two-player option — what folly!

FERRARI GRAND PRIX

FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 61% ◆ Tel 0962 877788

Five control systems, five custom car options, choice of weather, two-player split-screen game, realistic race series… This has plenty of features but the game itself is plain and too unforgiving.

HARD DRIVIN'

TENGEN ◆ £34.99 ◆ 68% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222

Fast 3D graphics portray the wild tracks, cars and trucks in this accurate coin-op conversion. It's a race against time and the Phantom Photon but a mere two tracks mean it doesn't match up to today's standards.

JAGUAR XJ220 (CD)

CORE DESIGN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 65% ◆ Tel N/A

A split-screen display accomodates two players, if desired, and a track editor allows the position of your own curves, dips and obstacles. The soundtrack's brilliant but perspective's questionable — as is playability.

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 0753 549442

A split-screen display from the traditional racing viewpoint where a selection of tracks and weather conditions await. The two-player game's simply brilliant and provides many laughs, so if you want a head-to-head racer…

MICRO MACHINES

CODEMASTERS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 0926 814132

Steer miniaturised vehicles around odd courses such as a breakfast table, bath and garden path, viewed from above. Colourful graphics, smooth scrolling and superb controls make *MM* one of the most playable racers.

OUTRUN

SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 55% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222

Long in the tooth and lack lustre nowadays. Choose your path across the States and put your foot down, taking in the colourful backgrounds, excellent music and speech. Limited courses and shallow gameplay are its downfall.

OUTRUN 2019

SEGA ◆ £37.99 ◆ 51% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

It runs at fine speed but roads twist unconvincingly and roadside obstacles jerk into view. The futuristic setting offers nothing new and tracks follow predictable patterns. The yawns soon follow.

ROAD BLASTERS FX (CD)

WOLFTEAM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel N/A

You're out for revenge! Sometimes staggeringly-fast cartoon animation is used for both through-the-windscreen and cut-away action. Wild stunts to make you gasp and versatile controls, for this type of CD game.

ROAD RASH II

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 86% ◆ Tel 0753 549442

If you were born to be wild, head out on the highway astride a high-tech cycle, clubs and chains at the ready. Good 3D and sense of movement, a lot of fun and a big challenge. Don't buy if you have the original.

SUPER HANG-ON

SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

The age-old aim: reach checkpoints in time. The road scrolls quickly and smoothly and the illusion of movement's convincing. The only fault is the bike's a little sluggish to handle, but at this price who's complaining?

SUPER OFF-ROAD

BALLISTIC ◆ £29.99 ◆ 68% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880

Drive small but perfectly formed 4x4 trucks around rugged single-screen courses. Computer is opposition is too tough and although you can update five vehicle attributes, it doesn't do much good.

TEST DRIVE II: THE DUEL

BALLISTIC ◆ £39.99 ◆ 65% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880

A Ferrari, Porsche and Lamborghini are at your disposal in a race against the computer to Rusti's Garage. The cars handle well but the scenery's so dull you may as well be stationary.

RPGs

A land to free, a magical item to find, a galaxy to liberate! In-depth adventures all have their rewards — and Virgin's high-tech *Corporation* gets 91%!

THE ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH (CD)

DYNAMIX ◆ £39.99 ◆ 58% ◆ Tel 0734 303322

As American schoolboy Willy, escape detention then get into surreal scrapes with your sister and dead grandfather. Cartoon graphics, fully characterised speech but horrific loading times cripple amusing gameplay.

BUCK ROGERS: COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £49.99 ◆ 82% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Various space-faring alliances face one another as Buck selects a crew of various skills. Plenty of gameplay and detail for RPG fans but more could've been made of the space scenario.

CADASH
TAITO ◆ £32.99 ◆ 60% ◆ Tel 0101 708 520 9280
Become a fighter or mage and go a-roving! Pretty slowly, mind you, and you'll be hard-pushed to find the role-playing elements. You're left with a weak platform game with nicely drawn but poorly animated graphics.

CORPORATION
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
It's you versus robots and mutants. Superlative 3D rooms and corridors and a host of gadgets firmly set the atmosphere. Defence systems are shut down with a mixture of firepower and logic. A massive challenge.

HOLLOW WORLD
SEGA ◆ £59.99 ◆ 67% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Scour the newly-formed Hollow World for threats. Villagers are nattered to, armour and weapons upgraded and special objects discovered. Nice graphics but no atmosphere and little to keep the experienced adventurer busy.

RINGS OF POWER
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £49.99 ◆ 85% Tel 0753 549442
Travel on foot and by Dino, Landbeast and boats to find the Rod Of Creation. Slick programming and great isometric graphics are the first attraction, in-depth tasks and a massive challenge follow.

SHINING IN THE DARKNESS
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 89% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
The duff storyline is forgotten when the superbly designed and coloured graphics flash onscreen. Magic and different fightings tactics defeat monsters, lateral thinking's needed at other times. One of the best Sega RPGs.

SUPER HYDLIDE
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 47% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Small ugly graphics are a bad sign. You die frequently for no apparent reason, then run out of time and patience. RPG afficionados will find enough to stay occupied but there are better on the market.

SHOOT-'EM-UP
Whether aboard a helicopter, space ship or plane, or running along as a soldier, robot, wizard or cop, blasters have as many victims as they do fans.

AFTERBURNER III (CD)
CRI/SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
A CD sequel to the coin-ops. Jet fighter sprites look good and move realistically but ground graphics are crude and dull. There's great music and effects but not enough to do. Spend your loose change on the real thing.

ALIEN 3
PROBE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel N/A
Part exploration, part shoot-'em-up, slaphead Ripley's got her work cut out for her. Grisly graphics and superlative sounds set the scene for a heart-stopping battle. Be quick on the trigger but keep an eye on your ammo.

ATOMIC RUNNER
DATA EAST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 66% ◆ Tel 0101 408 286 7080
Detailed, original backgrounds mix ancient artefacts with technology. But great graphics do not a game make: it's unimaginative, controls are very awkward and 15 continues put paid to lastability.

BIO-HAZARD BATTLE
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 82% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Aside from its toughness, it's the unusual creepy-crawly enemies (hence the 'bio') which set this aside from the average blaster. Sprites are superior, backgrounds a touch bland, but it's playable.

DEATH DUEL
RAZORSOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 30% ◆ TEL 0101 405 843 3505
Great pics between levels but graphics are otherwise childish in this cursor-controlled shooter. Duff FX, restrictive controls and boring gameplay. Taking pot-shots at cowardly monsters ain't fun...

DESERT STRIKE
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Pilot an Apache 'copter on five taxing missions, taking on (and out) anti-aircraft units and SAM sites. The missions are well put together; superb sprites, responsive controls and realistic effects bring them to life. A classic blast.

EMPIRE OF STEEL
FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 72% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Blast seven shades of **** out of Lemmy! Om, sorry, you set against the Motorhead *Empire*. Well shaded parallax backgrounds, oodles of weapons, pumping tunes, great effects and speech, compact sprites... A pity it's so easy!

FINAL ZONE
RENOVATION ◆ £39.99 ◆ 73% ◆ Tel 0101 408 982 2700
As Howie Bowie (sic), climb into a powersuit and stomp through seven war zones. Controls are a pain and plenty of wandering and repetition is required. Dull backdrops, good sprites but there's often slowdown. Missed potential.

FIRE SHARK
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 62% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Strange: you fly a bi-plane yet can acquire three-way fire, Wide Shot and Super Shot — a four-way laser! Scrolling's smooth but backgrounds are similar, sounds are irritating and it's too easy and unexciting.

GALAXY FORCE 2
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 42% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Once, it was an impressive, expensive coin-op. Now it's a cheap and pretty nasty cart. The ship handles badly, there's sprite flicker and an irritating voice babbles at you during tunnel sections. Too easy.

GLEY LANCER
NCS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel N/A
On paper it's a standard scrolling shooter — power-ups, end-of-level craft etc — the only difference being a selectable permanent add-on. Good use of colour, infinite continues and a *hard* Hard setting. A good, slick blast.

G-LOC
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 70% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Don't expect anything as flash as the coin-op, but as a straight-laced shoot-'em-up, *G-LOC*'s entertaining. A fast, smooth blast with sampled voices, realistic effects and presentation pics.

GYNOUG
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
A graphic treat: smooth, parallax-scrolling backgrounds, dazzling ripple effects, big, well animated enemies and no slowdown. The sounds aren't bad and the six levels will keep you playing.

HELLFIRE
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
A galaxy-saving mission, various power-ups and end-of-level motherships. So far, so predictable. But the ship has unique directable firepower, which adds strategy, and gameplay's very tough, in an unputdownable way.

JUNGLE STRIKE
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 94% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Pilot a Comanche helicopter, combat hovercraft, Stealth fighter and Special Forces motorbike to stop a madman. The graphics and sound are staggeringly realisitic and the missions are all challenging and fun. Superb stuff.

MERCS
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 83% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Jog along vertically-scrolling levels, *Ikari Warriors*-style, and let fly with various collectable firearms. Seven brightly-coloured levels provide an unoriginal but playable challenge.

MUSHA
SEISMIC ◆ £39.99 ◆ 70% ◆ Tel N/A
Frog-like robot armour flies up few but lengthy levels; by the time you're used to them, you run out of game! Great visuals — big, colourful, smooth scrolling — but too easy and unoriginal.

PREDATOR 2
ARENA/ACCLAIM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
A Predator's on the loose but Harrigan's on his tail. He blasts drug dealers and finds hostages on isometric 3D levels before the alien makes things difficult. Small sprites and bland backdrops, unoriginal and unexciting gameplay.

SEWER SHARK (CD)
SONY IMAGESOFT ◆ £44.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 0101 310 858 3777
Fly along FMV sewer tunnels, blast Radigators, bats and assorted mutated creatures while keeping an ear open for directions. It's great to look at and the digitised actors perform well, but lastability isn't good.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST II
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 66% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
The hero's in search of his sis. Enemies are dispatched with a ball and chain, objects are found, used and traded. Graphics and sound are impressive but gameplay's tough and puzzle solutions are tenuous.

TIME GAL (CD)
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 68% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
To help guide Gal through time, react to globes at the screen's edge. Japanese cartoon action portrays dinosaurs, WWII planes, pirates, sharks and the undead. Great fun but sadly limited.

TOEJAM & EARL
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Three-legged ToeJam and fat Earl search for parts of their ship while gathering 'presents' which fend off adversaries. An astonishing array of wacky sound samples and cartoon graphics make it a feast for the senses. Weird — but cool!

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
As an Acme detective, search for Carmen and her henchmen. An icon-driven control system's used to gather clues which lead to various locations. Digitised pics and cartoon sprites but it's the deductive gameplay that hooks.

WHERE IN TIME IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £49.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Use the enclosed encyclopaedia to find clues to historic times and places. A pointer system enters clues to narrow down and capture suspects. Graphics are bland but 80 missions keep you busy and teach you a few things, too.

WONDERBOY V
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222
'Boy explores Monster Land in arcade sections, slaying monsters to earn money for weapons, magic spells and items. A relaxed pace but the mixture of arcade and RPG works well. Battery backup keeps you going.

BEAT-'EM-UP
If inflicting black eyes, bruises and broken limbs is your idea of fun, there's sure to be something here you'll enjoy. Several involve platform sections but body blows are king.

CYBORG JUSTICE
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Bash mechanoids' bolts. A number of robot-rattling options, including 'build your own', and superb animation.

DOUBLE DRAGON
BALLISTIC ◆ £29.99 ◆ 39% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880
Jimmy and/or Billy Lee pound through thug after thug, level after level, to rescue they're favourite girl. It doesn't take them long because *DD*'s easy, not to mention outdated.

DOUBLE DRAGON III
ACCLAIM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 64% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Jimmy and brother go in search of magical gems which bring people back from the dead. Great graphics and sound but limited moves and repetitivegameplay.

FATAL FURY
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
From eight ugly, muscly streetfighters, one-on-one bouts are arranged. Massive characters, minimal slowdown. Moves take time to master. The computer's a good opponent but a second player's better.

FISTS OF STEEL
SAGE'S CREATION ◆ £44.99 ◆ 29% ◆ Tel 0101 415 346 2278
A crusty coin-op featuring cute dwarven fighters. But their animation is pitiful and FX are dreadful. There are only two moves you can't retaliate once an opponent starts laying in. A loser.

GOLDEN AXE II
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222
One or two players become a barbarian, dwarf or Amazon woman to retrieve the axe. Basically the same as the original but with tougher, faster enemies and controllable magic level.

KING OF THE MONSTERS
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 51% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Become a Godzilla lookalike, rock creature, mutated insect or giant superhero and mangle Japanese towns while battling another monster. Frivolous graphics for frivolous gameplay but it passes a few hours.

LAST BATTLE
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 18% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
One of the first MD games — and it shows. Standard walk and punch gameplay, few moves and awful sound, *Last Battle* is the standard reply to 'What's the worst game you've played?'

MAZIN SAGA
SEGA ◆ 39.99 ◆ 67% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
In a post-apocalypse world, command the Mazinger-Z armour in *Golden Axe*-style levels, switching to *SF II* one-on-one at the end of each. Graphics are amazing but gameplay lacks 'oomph'.

PIT FIGHTER
DOMARK/TENGEN ◆ £49.99 ◆ 76% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Become Buzz, Kato or Ty and fight down and dirty with ten fighters. Digitised graphics and sound add realism as you pound the controls, learn moves and grab handy objects. Pricey and crude but still exciting.

POWER ATHLETE
KANEKO ◆ £39.99 ◆ 57% ◆ Tel 0101 708 808 1370
A *Street Fighter II* wannabe. In one-player mode, you're stuck as Joe, and there are few moves. It's too easy but there are plenty of options and graphics are crisp and smooth.

SPLATTERHOUSE 2
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 41% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Transform into a steroid-poppin' psycho to rescue your girlfriend. A variety of horrific beasts attack; retaliate with fists, feet, staffs and chainsaws.

STREETS OF RAGE II
SEGA ◆ £44.99 ◆ 93% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
The best got better. The four heroes have many moves and several objects to maim the mobsters who stand between them and Mr X. Big, fast sprites, parallax, brilliant music and sampled effects. An epic bone-crusher.

TMNT: THE HYPERSTONE HEIST
KONAMI ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 081 429 2446
Konami's first MD game is nothing amazing (it *is* only the Turtles) but the cartoon graphics, sense of humour and frantic action are enough to keep anyone happy.

WWF WRESTLEMANIA
ACCLAIM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 72% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Grappling fans are well catered for, with one-on-one, tag team, tournament and Survivor Series matches and eight WWF wrestlers. Slick presentation, big sprites and many moves put Wrestlemania in your hands.

FLIGHT SIMS
Get away from it all. Fly into the blue and above the clouds, relax... before pumping several dozen rounds into an unsuspecting enemy fighter! Not much choice, yet.

F22 INTERCEPTOR
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.95 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
F22 takes the complication out of flying — you automatically refuel and don't take off/land, unless you choose otherwise. What's left is fast action and lots of it. Slick 3D and good FX put you in the picture.

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
An Apache also at your disposal, missions involve many vehicles, weather conditions and strike times. Impressive external views and rockets/explosions.

MIG-29
DOMARK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Take a MiG on five varied combat missions around the Middle East. The polygon graphics are detailed and fairly fast, the soundtrack's great and pull-down menus easily used. Realism and depth for your money.

STEEL TALONS
TENGEN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 62% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Pilot an Apache attack helicopter on 12 missions in an attempt to earn Steel Talons membership. Good vector graphics but perspective and occasional sluggishness puts you off. Uneventful; missions are easy to give up on.

PLATFORM
Conquer villains and strange lands in leaps and bounds. A range of styles is represented here, from the strategy of *Humans* to *Captain America*'s heroics and aquatic antics of *The Little Mermaid*.

BONANZA BROS
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 75% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222
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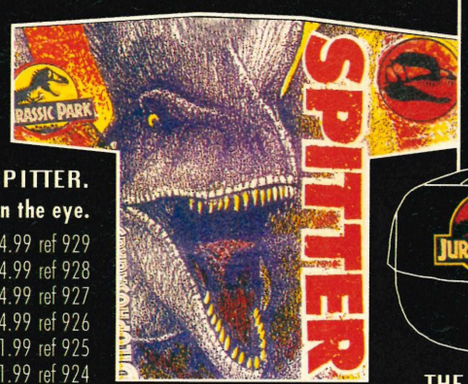
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6. ***GAMES DIRECT FROM SEGA (THAT WORK)***
This is the MM team's particular favourite. No more pretending to be some other bloody magazine to get games out of Sega — Instead game chips that work arrive first time, every time — without even asking!

STOP PRESS: SINCE DESIGNING THIS ADVERT, IT HAS COME TO OUR ATTENTION THAT WE CANNOT, INFACT, DO MIRACLES


128
128
FREUNDE
WERDEN

Welcome to the first MEGA MACHINES classified ads section. This is where you get to swap, buy or sell your unwanted belongings… for free! Okay, so we're not actually giving *money* away but you must admit, it DID grab your attention, didn't it? We put that 'normous great sign there in a cynical attempt to get you to send in your ads so, please, send 'em, yeah? Usually, you're made to pay for the privilege of flogging your duff games and crappy Commodore 64s – but not here! Provided you use the coupon on the right (not a photocopy of it, ya tight beggars), you can advertise practically anything (except your gran).

We accept absolutely NO adverts from the trade, and MEGA MACHINES claims no responsibility for dodgy or failed transactions. Our motto is: 'Let The Buyer Beware', which is a legal term meaning 'We've Covered Our Asses'.

A special 'Sad' prize will be awarded to the saddest ad each issue – as judged by our Editorial Assistant, Gavin 'Mad, Bad and *very* Sad' Weston.

*Well, sort of...

Classified Information

Send this coupon to: **The Classified Department, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.** For private use ONLY. No trade ads accepted. The Managing Editor reserves the right to alter or refuse ads which do not conform to acceptable standards (but they'd have to be pretty damn shocking, as he's a birrova yob on the quiet).

PLEASE TICK WHICH CATEGORY YOU'D LIKE YOUR AD TO APPEAR UNDER:

FOR SALE	☐	**SWAPS**	☐
ITEMS WANTED	☐	**PEN PALS**	☐
USER GROUPS	☐	**OTHER**	☐

I would like my classified ad to read:

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

.....**Postcode:**.....

STRAY BULLETS

This is the part of the mag where we all get to sit around a beer-sodden table down the local boozer, kickin' back, chillin' out and generally getting legless. Between games of beermat frisbee and dunk the dry roasted (don't ask), we pool our collective consciousness to come up with a few pearls of wisdom that've been proffered to us via any number of sources during the month (but we decided against calling it 'Pearls Before Swine' as we felt that was just poxy). Here, then, are a selection of quotes that we've collected together for no other reason other than they made us laugh...

'Oh no! Not another bloody Sega mag!'
Andrew Wright, Head of PR Sega Europe

'YES, BUT DON'T THE GRAPHICS AND SOUND MAKE UP FOR IT?'
VAL BARR, PR MANAGER (EUROPE) TECMAGIK

'Have you heard what Dexter Fletcher did at the HMV bash?'
Nearly everyone in the whole industry

'You want to put WHAT on the front cover?!'
Graham Kidd, Publisher
Mega Machines

'You want me to do WHAT for the cover photo!?'
James Beaven, Reviews Editor
Mega Machines

'Yeah, sorry about that — we're having trouble with our chip blower'
Nick Channon, PR-Type Dude, Electronic Arts

'Are you calling me 'naff'? Get outta me shop!'
Manageress, Stars Newsagents
Ludlow

'See Graham about it'
Eddie McKendrick, Publishing director
Mega Machines

'Oh. You'd better se Eddie about it'
Graham Kidd, Publisher
Mega machines

'Can you take a few pages back?'
Michelle Bullen, Advertising Department
Impact Magazines

'Is that a polite way of asking me to leave?'
Nick Lawrence, Ex-Staff Writer
Mega Machines

'SSSPINING BRRRWRRRRWRRD KICK'
CHUN LI, WORLD WARRIOR
STREET FIGHTER II (MD)

So, how do you actually play Sonic The Hedgehog then?
Nick Lawrence, Ex-Staff Writer
Mega Machines

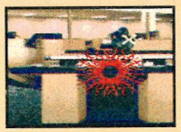
'Time gentlemen, please!'
Fat Mike, The Landlord
Local Boozer

'...challenging, addictive gameplay'
Jason Johnson, on Spiderman X-Men (sic)
Sega Pro Magazine

130 130 NEXT MONTH:


EA's New Soccer Game


F117 Night Storm


Lethal Enforcers (MD)


Blades Of Vengeance


Lethal Enforcers (CD)!


Sonic Spinball

And probably Zombies Ate My Neighbours, WWF Rage In The Cage CD, The Incredible Crash Dummies and T2: Judgement Day too!

JAN ISSUE OF MEGA MACHINES ON SALE
DECEMBER 9th — BUT IT, IT'LL BE GREAT!

MEGA machines

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FRANK O'CONNOR (for the best laugh w
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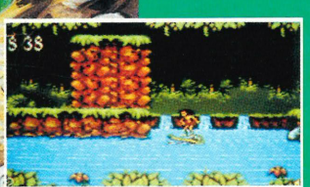
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The Video Game

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SEGA GAME GEAR™

SEGA Master System™

Available on Sega Game Gear™ & Master System™ soon.

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